With this ring: a screenplay.

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INT. JED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JED is a handsome, physically fit man in his mid-twenties. He has blue eyes and light hair which he keeps in a crew-cut.

He sits at his computer, staring at the screen. He reaches for a pot pipe sitting on the desk while looking at the screen. He pinches a little bit of marijuana from a saucer and puts it in the pipe. He brings the pipe up and focuses on it. He looks at it intently for a moment, examining it, turning it around in his hand. He puts the pipe down. He picks it up again, puts it to his lips and quickly FLICKS the lighter. He inhales.

INT. JED’S COMPUTER SCREEN - NIGHT

WORD DOCUMENT

Circles
Loops
Rings
Hoops
Circumnavigating only to return to the same spot.

Smoke billows over the computer screen. The phone RINGS.

INT. JED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jed types gobbledy-gook. He picks up the phone.

JED

Hello.

DAN (O.S.)

Jedder!

JED

Danny! What cha doin?

DAN’S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Dan is in a shirt and tie and white lab coat and ID badge identifying him as Dr. Dan Scooley. He has brown eyes and black hair and is a small, thin man in his mid-thirties. He is sitting at his desk. Jed is heard on other end.
DAN
Well, I called to tell you Tracy and I are getting married.

JED (O.S.)
(subdued)
Danny! How exciting!

INT. JORI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT
JORI is a short woman with beautiful curves. She has mounds of curly red hair and freckles. She is waving a script about in her hand as she speaks on the phone.

JORI
Whoa! Stand back. This is wild. It’s . . .
It’s scandalous! This is out-fucking-rageous.
I love it! I absolutely love it!

She is shaking her head no.

INT. KENT AND CINDY’S DINING ROOM - NIGHT
KENT has light hair and blue eyes. He is smaller than Jed but also physically fit. CINDY is a petite buxom blonde with girlish features.

Kent, holding a phone to his ear, is in a jogging suit, looking shocked while wiping his brow with a towel. Cindy can be seen through door stirring a dish on the stove and talking on the phone.

KENT
Come again?

EXT. SAN DIEGO FREEWAY - DUSK
Dan is in his convertible on his cell phone.

DAN
Tracy and I are getting married.
INT. KENT AND CINDY’S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cindy’s eyes bug as she takes a swig of wine. She turns to Kent and they both drop their mouths in dismay.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

PHIL JR. (aka SCOOLEY) is six feet tall, has a linebacker build and a beer belly. He has black hair and dark eyes. MICHELLE is 5’5” with long frosted, frizzy hair. She uses a curling iron to curl her bangs into identical wings she plasters with hairspray. She also has a beer gut.

Scooley is at the desk. Michelle is behind him on the other side of island in dining area. Both are on a phone and have Budweisers.

SCOOLEY
Danny boy! My good man. What pray tell, hast thou brother, the impeccable doctor with an asundary of accolades, awards, and olive branches to hang on his mantle, made this late night inquiry into my home, estate of your older brother, yours truly? What say you?

He starts to sit at desk chair.

DAN (O.S.)
Tracy and I are getting married.

Scooley’s eyes enlarge. He misses the seat of the chair, his butt sliding off the arm causing the chair to move out from under him. The chair rolls away and beer spills everywhere. Scoole sits down hard on the floor as Michelle watches stunned.

EXT. TELEPHONE POLE - DAY

The transformer on pole reads “Milwaukee Power and Light.”

KENT (O.S.)
Gold digger! Gold digger! Gold digger!
INT. KENT AND CINDY’S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kent is on the couch with his feet up, talking on the phone. Cindy is on floor playing with Lincoln Logs.

    JORI (O.S.)
    Kent, Tracy can’t be that bad.

    KENT
    You’ve only met the fruitcake once. Cindy and I had our vacation ruined by the freak!

EXT. NEW HAMPSHIRE - DAY

    JORI (O.S.)
    Michelle thinks Tracy is going to murder Dan for his money.

INT. JORI’S APARTMENT - DAY

Jori is on the phone, reading a script.

    JED (O.S.)
    We can’t be that dysfunctional. Maybe Tracy and Dan are soul mates.

    JORI
    Oh, Jed, ever the optimist.

INT. JED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jed is sitting on couch with his head back, on the phone. A MAN’S head can be seen bobbing up and down between his legs.

    JED
    Okay, so maybe Tracy does have a few quirks.

    MICHELLE (O.S.)
    A few? Tracy is stuck in the 70’s. Feathered hair, gold chains...the last time they came up, Scooley got athlete’s foot from the shower.
JED
Okay, a lot of quirks.

He responds to blow job.

JED (CONTD)
Oh!

INT. SCOOLEY AND MICHELLE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Michelle, phone on shoulder, and beer in hand, is snapping her fingers at her daughter ALLISON to put book down.

MICHELLE
Allison, it's time for bed. And they're doing this on our fucking Wedding anniversary. Our fucking wedding anniversary!

Allison, ten, with long blonde hair and fair skin, goes by not phased by the language.

JED (O.S.)
It'll be another reason to party, Michelle.

INT. KENT AND CINDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cindy is on the phone at vanity putting on nail polish. A Barbie doll in a similar outfit sits on the vanity's edge.

CINDY
When we were out there, Dan's friend Kevin told us Tracy had a lover in Hawaii who died mysteriously.

Cindy sips wine, BLOWS on her nails, then on Barbie's hand.

CINDY (CONTD)
I swear Dan is in danger.

INT. JORI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jori is still on couch with script in hand, LAUGHING.
JORI
Granted, Tracy is a kook, but you’re worse than Dianna was, making it sound like we’re in an Alfred Hitchcock movie.

INT. SCOOLEY AND MICHELLE’S DEN - NIGHT

Scooley is on phone with Budweiser in hand.

SCOOLEY
What are we supposed to tell the girls? They were just getting used to that psycho Kelly.

KENT AND CINDY’S LIVING ROOM

Kent is playing with dog while on phone. A bong is on table. Cindy is watching a shopping network.

KENT
He says he’s practicing serial monogamy! What the hell is serial monogamy?

CINDY
Kent, look! They’re selling Freedom Bags!

INT. JORI’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jori, on phone, is removing stage make-up.

JORI
He’s practicing serial ‘psycho’ monogamy.

INT. JED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jed is on the phone, sitting on his living room floor cutting out laminated work by his students.

JED
He attracts people with weird issues. It’s like he dates his dream psychiatric patients.
EXT. MODULAR HOME - DAY

Michelle is watering flowers while on portable phone. She has a beer in hand. We can see Allison and OLIVIA, eight, with long red hair, in yard behind Michelle, playing with the dogs.

MICHELLE
I've never fucking liked Tracy and never fucking will. There is something in those facial ticks...like Dianna. Remember her ticks? Like he's used way too much coke.

INT. KENT AND CINDY’S BEDROOM - EVENING

Cindy is unwrapping a package. She pulls out a Freedom Bag.

CINDY
It’s got a compartment for everything, your toothbrush, deodorant, lipstick, shampoo . . . Well, somebody has got to say something to Dan.

INT. JED’S APARTMENT - DAY

Jed is on the couch talking on the phone.

JED
No way! Remember when I tried to talk to him. He threw Anthony up in my face and what right did I have talking to him about relationships when I can’t keep my pants on long enough to even have a relationship of my own. No way. No way. He didn’t talk to me for months.

INT. SCOOLEY’S GARGAGE - DAY

Scooley is working on 1984 Z28 holding portable with shoulder. There is a beer on the fender of the car.

SCOOLEY
What does dad think?
INT. LOCKER ROOM OFFICE - DAY

Kent is on cell phone in coach’s warm-up suit, a whistle around his neck. Locker room NOISES filter in.

KENT
You know Dad and Margaret. They were gushing in their typical blubbery fashion.

He YELLS out to the athletes.

KENT (CONTD)
On the court in sixty!

Speaks into phone in falsetto.

KENT (CONTD)
As long as he’s happy. We’re glad he’s found someone to love, blah, blah, blah.

INT. JORI’S APARTMENT - DAY

She is on phone sitting on couch. Her boyfriend JIM, medium build, dark features and a gut, sits next to her. She kills a roach on the coffee table while he licks the paper of a joint.

JORI
Has he told mom?

EXT. BRANSON, MO STRIP - NIGHT

INT. LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

JO is a thin, petite woman in her sixties. She has short red hair and is always impeccably dressed. She is standing in doorway of sliding glass doors watching The Sound of Music and smoking a cigarette. The song playing is “Something Good”.

The phone RINGS. Jo smudges cigarette in metal box, and slides the box under a flower box on the deck then runs to the phone.

JO
Hello.
DAN (O.S.)
Hi Mom!

JO
(sings)
Danny Boy, Danny Boy, mamma’s little
Danny Boy.

DAN
Hey, put Bill on. I want you both to
hear this.

JO
He’s at some high-level testosterone
gun slinging, animal killing meeting.
Oh, did I say that out loud? I shouldn’t
have said that. It wasn’t very Christian

She smacks her cheek with her mouth open producing a sound.

JO(CONTD)
Ho, ho, ho! He’s really a wonderful
man. What are you so riled up about?

INT. DAN’S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan is at desk on phone.

DAN
Mom - -

JO (O.S.)
That’s me. Your only mamma!

DAN
Mom...I’m getting married.

No response.

DAN (CONTD)
Mom?
INT. JO AND BILL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JO
Have you told your father and that big fat Margaret?

DAN (O.S.)
No, mom. I wanted to tell you first.

JO
Well...Have you gone mad? You can’t get married. How can you get married? What? Can you?

INT. DAN'S OFFICE AT HOME - NIGHT

TRACY walks in. Tracy wears his shirts open to show his hairy chest and gold chains. He is a tan, blonde beach bum past his prime. He has a cigarette tightly clinched between his teeth, ashes in need of being tapped off. He walks over behind Dan, who is on the phone, to rub his shoulders.

DAN
We’ll see you at the commitment ceremony, Mom, not the wedding. Okay. I love you, too. Bye.

TRACY
How did everything go?

DAN
Good, I think. They’re all coming. Everyone seems excited. I just wish Dianna were here. I should be calling her too.

Tracy pulls cigarette out of his mouth, letting the ash fall where it will, and leans down to hug Dan.

INT. JED'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jed is still on the phone. KATE looks on. She is solidly built with short hair and glasses.
JED
(into phone)
Wow, it's getting close. I am so excited.
About seeing everyone...not the wedding.
(laughs)
Stop! You're terrible. Okay. Yeah, we'll
party and have a great time. I love you,
too. Bye.

Jed hangs up. Kate jumps up and joins Jed on couch.

KATE
I can't believe it! They're getting married!

JED
Yeah, but, I swear, "The Scooley Drama"
drives me nuts. I love my brothers and
sisters, uh sister, but I'm not sure I
can handle them for five days.

KATE
It'll be exciting.

JED
Yeah, everyone will get high and drunk.
Scooley and Michelle will snort coke in the
bathroom. Dad will espouse the virtues of AA
in long and condescending lectures. We'll spend
all our time dissing and hashing everybody
else's problems and issues but our own. Like
Dianna. Hell, we did all that at her funeral.

KATE
Avoidance.

JED
Dysfunction. What ever it is, Dianna's
expertise killed her. Hell, we're all
experts. Makes me wonder who'll be next.

INT. STAIRCASE IN DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

We're looking through the lens of a video camera, a red
recording light flashing in the corner of the screen.
Awkwardly the camera moves to the wall to focuses on a framed photo of Jori.

TRACY (O.S.)
Dan and Tracy’s commitment ceremony weekend. Uh, this is Jori, Dan’s baby sister. She’s dating a really hot guy, Jim. Mm mmm.

INT. JIM’S APARTMENT - MORNING
Jori and Jim are asleep, the room a filthy mess. Jori wakes with a start and looks at the clock. She gets up and rushes around gathering up things.

JORI
Oh, shit. Oh, Fuck. Oh, shit. Oh, fuck. It’s almost noon. Liz’s going to be here in fifteen minutes. Oh, shit! Oh, fuck! If I miss my flight...what happened to the alarm? Jim, did the alarm go off?

Jim doesn’t move.

JIM
Yep.

JORI
Why didn’t you get me up?

JIM
Oh, so now that’s my responsibility? Must I do everything for you? You can’t do anything.

JORI
No, it’s not your responsibility. It just would have been nice and polite.

She throws a T-shirt at him.

JIM
Nice and polite. Yeah, okay, Jori.
JORI
(mocking)
Yeah, okay, Jim.

Jim sits up and pulls her onto the bed.

JIM
You’re such a smart ass.

He tickles her and they kiss.

JORI
I learned from the smartest sphincter there is. I’ve got to get going.

Jori stands too quickly, feeling woozy.

JORI (CONTD)
Whoa - am I hung out to dry.

JIM
Poor baby, can’t party with the big dogs.

JORI
Nooo. I just don’t have the tolerance that extends beyond our atmosphere into the far reaches of another galaxy.

Waving her hand at his belly.

JORI (CONTD)
I have no intention of nurturing and cultivating a gargantuan gut that caters only to Budweiser.

JIM
Hey, turn around.

She turns, looking back over her shoulder.

JORI
What?

JIM
Just want to see your sphincter surpass smart on its way to sheer genius.
Jori wiggles her ass at him. He MOANS and rolls over. Now dressed, she goes into bathroom for aspirin. She YELLS.

    JORI (O.S.)
    Oh, God! You puked!

    JIM
    I did?

Jori comes to the bathroom door, glass of water in hand.

    JORI
    You mean you don’t remember? Well, it’s all coming back to me.
        (swallows pills)
    At least clean it up before I get back.

    JIM
    I’ll clean it up. I’m not some --

    JORI
    Look around you! Why the hell do you think I don’t move in?

    JIM
    Get off my case, bitch.

He covers his head with a pillow.

    JORI
        (a deep breath)
    I’m heading down to wait for Liz.

Jori moves the pillow and bends down to kiss Jim. He grabs her and gives her a passionate kiss. When he releases her, she throws back sheets and bends down to address his penis.

    JORI (CONTD)
    I’ll miss you the most, Scarecrow.

She looks in Jim’s eyes.

    JORI (CONTD)
    There’s no place like home.

She shakes her finger at his penis and baby talks.
JORI (CONTD)
Be good. Stay clean. I love you.

She kisses her finger and puts it on his penis. Jim LAUGHS. She grabs her bag and tries to zip it, but can’t. Jim gets out of bed and roughly snatches the bag.

JIM
(sarcastic)
Here, let me help you. I know retards have problems with their motor skills.

JORI
I can do it.

JIM
No, you can’t, you see. You’re a clod.

Jim zips up the bag and hands it to her.

JORI
It’s just a zipper.

Jim bows his head and rubs his hand over his hair.

JORI
Thanks. Love you.

Jim touches her cheek and smiles as if she were a child.

INT. STAIRCASE IN DAN’S HOUSE - DAY

Tracy’s camera moves from Jori’s picture to one of Jed.

TRACY(O.S.)
This is Jed, the other gay bro. Mmm. A testament to the fact that homosexuality is genetic. He’s always on the prowl.

INT. JED’S BEDROOM - MORNING

Jed is packing a suitcase on the bed. Kate enters, wearing a minister’s collar and is carrying a paper bag.
KATE
Okay, I got you two rolls of film and you didn’t say what flavor so I got you ‘sensitive skin’.

She pulls shaving cream out of sack and waves it about.

JED
(subdued)
Just put it in my bag.

Kate pulls a wrapped gift out of her sack.

KATE
Laura and I almost broke up over these damn intertwining crystal frames.

She looks at Jed’s overstuffed suitcase.

KATE (CONTD)
Are you going to have enough room? Look at all this stuff. Oh, yeah. Gay men pack for all occasions.

Jed is distracted. Kate waves package in his face.

JED
Oh, yeah... I should have enough room.

KATE
Hey, mood meld.

She puts her hand on his shoulder in some kind of Vulcan grip.

KATE (CONTD)
I’m quiet and subdued. I can’t go. You’re in the throes of enthusiastic anticipation. You get to go.

Jed continues to absent-mindedly pack. Kate removes hand.

KATE (CONTD)
If I could sing and dance like Judy, I’d be tapping my way through “Sing Hallelujah Come on Get Happy”.
On the verge of tears, Jed shrugs, pushes the suitcase out of the way and sits down on bed. Kate quickly sits next to him.

KATE (CONT'D)
Oh, honey, what is it?

JED
This is it. I'm the only one.

He is fighting the urge to cry. Kate grabs a Kleenex box off the nightstand as she puts her arm around him.

KATE
What do you mean, you're the only one?

JED
Everyone's married.

KATE
Oh. Jori's not married.

JED
She might as well be. She's been with that genetic malfunction for two years.

Jed BLOWS his nose.

KATE
But she's not, thank God. Then you'd really have a right to be miserable.

JED
She loves him. She has someone to love. That's all that matters.

KATE
She loves Jim's huge genetic malfunction!
(beat)
Oh, Jed, look around you. You can have anyone you want it's just --

JED
That's the problem! I want that man and that man and that man and that man --
KATE
Exactly verbatim from my mouth. It will happen.

JED
If I’m not too busy getting dressed to leave.

KATE
You’re still having fun. When you’re ready --

JED
I had Anthony, but I couldn’t keep my pants up long enough to see we had a good thing.

KATE
You’ll meet a man, get to know him and --

JED
Why can’t I think with my heart and brain instead of this...this --

Jed swats at his penis as Kate LAUGHS.

KATE
The only way your brain is getting oxygen right now is through that tiny little hole.

JED
Oprah says I’m addicted.

KATE
Do you think you’re somehow fundamentally different than other men? Men were designed to breed and the only way to do that is to plant a seed in anything that moves.

JED
Then why do people get married?

KATE
Jed, society got together a couple thousand years ago and ruled monogamy was the only way to go.
Then Utah surrendered and became a state.

KATE
Right on! Most people are scared to step out of the norm, but that doesn’t mean something else is a sin.
(beat)
You’re happy, aren’t you - when you’re not worrying about what you don’t have?

JED
(sheepish)
Yes.

KATE
You have a great life. So you like to get hot and sweaty and physical with a lot of men. Don’t diminish that. Enjoy it.

JED
I’m so lucky to have you, Reverend Rationalization.

KATE
I’m not rationalizing. When you’re ready it’ll happen.

JED
Permission from the minister. It must be the word of God.

KATE
I tell the truth only to those God thinks can handle it. Just be careful, okay?

Jed pulls some condoms from suitcase and throws them at her.

INT. STAIRCASE OF DAN’S HOUSE - DAY

The jiggling camera moves to photo of Kent and Cindy.

TRACY(O.S.)
This is Kent and his wife Cindy. Kent is the macho jock. Mmmm.
INT. SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Kent and Cindy are on ramp coming off the plane.

CINDY
I think Tracy is picking us up.

KENT
Great. This oughta be interesting.

CINDY
I’m ready for “The Twilight Zone”.

KENT
Jobless gold digger.

CINDY
Kent, no scenes, okay? As much as we don’t like him, we’re here for Danny. Let’s try and have a good time.

KENT
Yes, honey. We’re here to see the family and have a good time.

They come off the ramp and immediately see Tracy, who rushes forward with a camera to take a picture.

TRACY
Smile!

Kent gives a forced smile.

KENT
He’s mentally defective.

Tracy, out of breath and sweating profusely, has erratic body movements. Cindy won’t let him take her carry-on bag.

CINDY

Tracy isn’t listening. He is busy taking pictures.
TRACY
Good flight?

KENT
They over-booked so we got bumped up to first class.

TRACY
You should have told me you were in coach. I have a friend who is a vice-president at American. I could have gotten you first class tickets, round trip. One time when I was driving Al Pacino, American messed up on the tickets so I got us on the next flight, first class and a $3,000 rebate for anywhere in the U.S. Al was impressed.

KENT
(whispers to Cindy)
Is he for real?

Tracy is filming them as he walks backward, being very boisterous and making a spectacle. Kent looks into the lens in shock and disgust.

TRACY
I promised Dan I’d film the entire ceremony weekend.

Tracy trips and nearly falls over another TRAVELER’S suitcase.

TRACY (CONTD)
I’m sorry ma’am.

KENT
(Whispers to Cindy)
Can he be for real? He’s a throwback!

Cindy can barely control her laughter.

CINDY
I never said he wasn’t. Tracy, uh, I could use a hand with this bag.
SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Dan, Jed and Jori are carrying bags to Dan’s convertible, LAUGHING. Dan puts their bags in the trunk.

Dan has a cell phone attached to his waist. It gives off STATIC, then Tracy’s voice.

TRACY(O.S.)
Huh, the packages have been delivered.

DAN
(listening)
Terrific!
(to Jed and Jori)
Kent and Cindy are here!

JORI
Yeah!

They get in the car and drive away. Jed sits in the back seat, his arms outstretched, head back, sunglasses on.

JED
This is fabulous! I can see why you love it so much.

DAN
I know! We’ve thought about moving back to the Midwest, but I could never leave. You’d love living out here, Jed.

JED
It frightens me. I’m afraid I’d get lost.

JORI
If I could find my way around when I lived in LA, you could too, Jed.

JED
No, I mean I’d get lost in the fray, all the decadence, all the temptations.

JORI
(laughs)
And you don’t “get lost” in Des Moines?
JED
See! Out here I’d die of sinful pleasures.

JORI
That sounds like an excellent way to go.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

DAN
But there’s more to California than just sin. I’m sure you’d love living out here.

JED
Out here! Out here! What is it with everyone and out here? There are forty-nine other states you know! California is not the end all. It’s all a big illusion anyway. If this were a movie or a commercial we’d be driving sixty miles an hour down a California highway, the blowing through our hair, instead --

JORI
Well, Jed --

JED
...of sitting five deep at a red light, one of many we’ll hit on the way home.

JORI
“Out here" we’d be driving eighty-five to ninety miles an hour, the wind whipping through our hair.

Jed and Dan LAUGH.

DAN
There’s just something about San Diego and California. I don’t know, it’s so --

JED
Movie starish?

Dan pulls onto freeway.
EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

DAN
That's it. Living here makes me feel glamorous. Hey! I saw some stupid movie once. I can't remember the name but it had a drag queen in it with the best line. Let's do it! Do the line.

Jed and Jori listen intently.

DAN (CONT'D)
There are three parts. I'll say "glamour first" and strike a pose. Jori you say "glamour last" and strike a pose, and Jed, since you're in the back seat with lots of room you say the last line and strike a big pose. Okay? Let's try it.

JED
Wait, what's my line?

DAN
(laughs)
Oh, uh, "glamour always". Ready?

JED
Yeah. I think so.

DAN
Remember, campy with lots of attitude.

JORI
Oh, I can do attitude.

DAN
Here we go.

Dan strikes a dramatic pose, his arm up like a showgirl's.

DAN (CONT'D)
Glamour first.

Jori's speaks in a character voice.
JORI
Glamour last.

Jed uses the whole back seat to kick a leg up and throw his arms into the air. He, too, speaks in a character voice.

JED
Glamour always.

They all LAUGH, the camera pulling away from them as if they’re in a car commercial.

INT. STAIRCASE OF DAN’S HOUSE - DAY

Video camera is now on photo of Scooley, Michelle and their girls.

TRACY (O.S.)
This is Dan’s older brother Phil. Everyone calls him Scooley. His wife, Michelle.
(sarcastic)
She loves gay people. And their girls Allison and Olivia.

EXT. CALIFORNIA - THE PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY

Scooley, Michelle, Allison and Olivia, are in a 1984 Camero Z28, the girls are asleep in the back. Scooley is driving and Michelle is in the passenger seat.

Scooley watches the road, occasionally looking down into Michelle’s lap, where she is rolling a joint on a small tray. Michelle puts the joint in the ashtray then quickly puts it all back in her purse, looking back to check on the girls.

Michelle cracks the window and lights the joint, takes a long hit, then passes it to Scooley. She isn’t watching the hand off and Scooley drops the joint in his lap.

SCOOLEY
(whispered)
Michelle!
Scooley grabs the joint from between his legs. The car swerves a bit as he thrusts it back to Michelle, who’s startled and pulls back, almost burned.

**MICHELLE**
Damn it, Scooley, you almost burned me.

She takes the joint and re-lights it, inhaling deeply.

**SCOOLEY**
Fuck, I think I burned the seat.

He is still digging in his crotch.

**MICHELLE**
(lungs full of smoke)
Is it still burning?

**SCOOLEY**
No, with no help from you.

Olivia sits up, awakened by the car swerving.

**MICHELLE**
Fuck you. You’re the one who dropped it.

**SCOOLEY**
Michelle, you weren’t even looking. You had your nose out the window.

**MICHELLE**
Don’t blame me for your fuck up.

**OLIVIA**
Mom, what happened?

Michelle quickly puts out the joint, hiding it in the ashtray.

**MICHELLE**
Uh, Daddy just slipped and the car swerved. Everything’s okay now.

**SCOOLEY**
Everything’s fine, sweetheart.
(under his breath)
Now that mommy’s needs have been met.
MICHELLE
It was your fault Scooley and I’m not saying sorry.

SCOOLEY
Jesus, Michelle! You had your head out the window. You weren’t watching what --

MICHELLE
My head was not out the window.

OLIVIA
What’s that smell?

MICHELLE
Oh, Daddy had a cigarette.

OLIVIA
Daddy! You said you quit. You promised!

SCOOLEY
(whispers)
Thanks! Now you make me the villain!
(to Olivia)
I have Olivia. Just a slip. It won’t happen again.
(whispers)
Your mom has seen to that.

Michelle smirks as Scooley glares at her. He swerves to make a turn off. Olivia is thrown against her sister and Michelle is tossed against the door.

MICHELLE
Phil! What are you doing?
The girls both sit up, looking stunned and dazed.

SCOOLEY
I have to go to the bathroom.

INT. STAIRCASE OF DAN’S HOUSE – DAY

Video camera focuses on photo of Dianna and her son P.J.
TRACY (O.S.)
This is Dianna and her son P.J. She died four years ago.
(coughs)
Lung cancer. I think P.J. is in prison.

DAN (O.S.)
Tracy! Don’t say that. This is our wedding video. It’s supposed to be happy.

TRACY (O.S.)
Oh. Sorry. P.J. is unable to come to the wedding. He’s tied up on business.

EXT. DAN’S SECOND FLOOR PORCH - DAY
Jori is on a porch swing with Jed, who reads a poem aloud.

JED
An effortless action can change the earth. Plain rights are self-evident from birth. To join hands with all we must pursue. So, I inquire if not me, then who?

He looks up. She’s silent for a moment then takes the paper.

JORDI
Jed, you commit all of the no-no's of poetry.

JED
What do you mean?

JORDI
Did you ever read a Frost or Dickinson poem that contained words like angry, joy or brave? Their poems are full of woods, nature...symbols, images for emotion. You don’t follow any --

JED
But that's what I want to do. I don’t want to follow. Isn't that good? To be unconventional, daring?
JORI
Jed...er, uh...the poem sounds like a Hallmark card.

JED
Of course it sounds like a Hallmark card, I'm a fucking faggot!

Jori bursts out LAUGHING. Jed takes the paper back.

JED (CONTD)
I wanna be a fucking Hallmark card.

JORI
Okay, then you're a fucking Hallmark card.

JED
Great. I can't imagine what you'll think of the poem I'm reading at the wedding.

A car horn SOUNDS. Jori walks to edge of balcony as Scooley's Camero pulls into the drive.

JORI
Only an hour late. Amazing.

Jed walks to screen door and CALLS into the house.

JED
Arriving late at gate 2: Delayed Scooley Airlines flight 13!

Jori stands.

JORI
And now for the photo shoot.

EXT. FRONT LAWN OF DAN'S HOME - DAY

Jo has heard the horn and come out. She cannot contain her excitement and is jumping up and down, clapping her hands and squealing. Jed and Jori are GIGGLING on the balcony, looking down on their mother. Jo hears them and looks up. Her look of joy turns to disgust when she realizes they are making good-natured fun.
JO
Get down here and hug your brother
and his family!

JED AND JORI
Yes, Mom.

Kent, Cindy, Dan, Tracy and Jo’s husband BILL (a 70-year-old
man looking like a junior high school boy), all come down the
steps. Tracy has video camera rolling.

Allison and Olivia run from the car to hug Jo. She is
exuberant in her hugs and kisses. Scooley watches, smiling as
he goes to trunk. Jo gives Michelle a big hug. Michelle is
happy, although it is hard to handle Jo’s energy.

JO
Oh, Michelle, you look so beautiful.
(gasps)
My camera!

She CALLS up to balcony.

JO (CONTD)
Jed! Get my camera!

Bill comes up with his hands behind his back.

BILL
Pick a hand.

JO
Did you get my camera?

BILL
Pick a hand.

Irritated, Jo swats his right arm. Bill holds out the camera
in his palm and she grabs it.

JO
Next time, just give me the camera.

BILL
(smiles)
Somebody doesn’t like to be teased.
Jo snaps a shot of the girls and Michelle hugs Cindy. Jed and Jori come dramatically out onto the front steps.

JORI
(a la Gloria Swanson)
I'm ready for my close-up Josephine deMille.

Jed follows her down as a model.

JED
JC Penny Catalogue!

They freeze for several campy poses.

JORI
And Vogue. And Vogue. And Vogue.

Jo snaps their picture.

JO
Oh, you two.

Jed flits across the lawn to Scooley at the car. Michelle watches in horrified awe. Tracy films the grass, a tree; basically everything that's not pertinent to what is going on.

KENT
Why does she always have that damn camera?

DAN
It's Mom's way of documenting our lives.

KENT
She hid behind it, all of us pretending to be happy. It's bizarre.

Scooley puts suitcases on ground as Kent and Dan approach.

SCOOLEY
Jedder!

He hugs Jed.
SCOOLEY (CONT'D)
Dan'l Boone! Kent, my man!

KENT
Scooooolaaay!

They hug. Dan tries to sound manly.

DAN
Scooo laaay!

Scooley LAUGHS and hugs Dan.

SCOOLEY
Try this. Scoooo-laaaaay!

JO
There’s my first born baby boy!

Jo jumps into Scooley’s arms. She bounces up and down, repeatedly kissing his cheek, SQUEALING all the while.

SCOOLEY
Hi, mom. Good to see you too.

JO
Oh, you’re so handsome!

SCOOLEY
Shucks, mom.

Jo is ready to take a picture.

JO
Boys, look this way!

KENT
Oh, no.

Kent turns to face away from camera.

JO
Scooley, Jed --

DAN
Hey, Mom wants to take our picture.
Kent.

JO

Scooley puts his arm around Jed who puts his arm around Dan. Kent does not turn around.

JO (CONTD)
Kent, turn around.

SCOOLEY
Well, in that case, I'll show my best side too.

Scooley turns around followed by Jed.

JED
Me, too.

Dan turns around too.

DAN
You guys! Well, we should at least have the best ass in the picture too!

JO
Okay! I'll take a picture of your "dairy airs".

The boys bend over slightly to stick out their asses for Jo's picture. Michelle, Jori and Cindy exchange glances.

KENT
Okay, let's get inside before she can take another.

Kent picks up some luggage. Jori walks over to Scooley.

SCOOLEY
Jelly Bean!

Jo snaps their picture as they walk arm in arm to the house.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
(imitating Jo)
My oldest boy and youngest girl.

Tracy has been filming but puts down his camcorder.
TRACY
I don't know. It's like being in a room full of pictures and it's like your life is a movie only the photographs don't move. I mean I photographed this blade of grass 'cuz of what it represented in this moment. Its nature, its essence --

An awkward silence in which Scooley and Jori exchange glances. Kent puts his head down and Cindy turns away.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

1970's photos of Tracy are on the wall. Other than a leathered face, his look has not changed. Bill is asleep on the couch below the photos with an open book across his stomach. Allison and Olivia are on the floor playing a game. LAUGHTER comes from the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family sits around the table, everyone in the throes of LAUGHTER.

SCOOLEY
And Dad is standing there shaking this terrified kid saying
(imitating a drunk)
"Josephine, this child was sent to us by God to punish me for my sins. We must raise this child as our own. We must repent. We must cleanse our evil souls!"

JO
Then he fell over like a tranquilized bear.

Kent does the motion with his arm on table. Everyone LAUGHS.

JO (CONT'D)
Poor boy, he was so terrified. And we couldn't figure out what school he went to because he had that terrible lisp.
SCOOLEY
(tries to say Madison)
Ma-uh-in.

More LAUGHTER. Dan SIGHS and Jed imitates him

JED
Oooooh.

Dan LAUGHS harder.

JO
I never could understand how your father managed to bring the wrong car home. I mean, it was maroon and ours was blue.

JORI
(incredulous)
He was drunk, mother!

MICHELLE
A sign of the times. You’d be an imbecile to leave the keys in your car nowadays.

KENT
Remember the car ride to Grandma’s and we wouldn’t stop horsing around in the back seat and Dad kept saying “You’re gonna get it!”?

Dan MOANS and puts his head in his hand.

KENT (CONTD)
And Dan kept saying, “What are we gonna get? What is it? Did Grandma buy us something? What are we gonna get?”

Tracy puts his hand on Dan’s back, smiling at him.

JO
(kidding)
Oh, this is terrible.

JORI
When are Dad and Margaret coming?
KENT
Dad got so pissed he pulled the car to the side of the road yelling, “I’ll show you!”

CINDY
(to Jori)
Tomorrow.

SCOOLEY
(interrupting)
Dan’s saying, “Yeah! We’re gonna get a surprise!” And Dianna and I are saying “Shut-up!” So Dad pulled Dan out and gave it to him!

More LAUGHTER.

KENT
(put off)
Then Mom tried to make it all better by taking a picture of us on the roadside.

JED
I wish Dianna were here.

LAUGHTER dies.

MICHELLE
(to Tracy)
Welcome to the Scooley family.

TRACY
Dan, those blows you took from you father represent the beating taken by the whole homosexual community.

Dan pats Tracy’s hand.

KENT
(to himself)
Where the hell did that come from?

JORI
Memories of a dysfunctional childhood.
How precious.
There is a spurt of LAUGHTER and then a quick silence.

JO
Now, I did the best I could to raise you kids.

JORI
Oh, Mom, you did a wonderful job.

DAN
Yes, Mom. You were great with us.

SCOOLEY
You raised us under overwhelming circumstances.

JED
You read to us every night. You taught us to love learning and to stand up for what we believe.

JORI
Ya done did right good, Ma.

JO
I did do pretty good didn’t I? I’d say an actress, two teachers, a doctor, a plumber and a --

JORI
Drug addict.

JO
(coldly)
I was going to say waitress. ’Taint bad.
(Baby talks)
And you all came from very own little baby box.

Jori HOOTS as the others exchange glances.

SCOOLEY
Yeah, Mom. I tell ya, raising children is the hardest job in the world.
He pats Michelle’s hand.

SCOOLEY (CONT'D)
If we could rear a generation of non-dysfunctional, phobia, abuse free kids, all the world’s problems would be solved.

MICHELLE
I quit teaching for that very reason. Fuck, I’m not about to let my kids be reared by someone else.

KENT
I mean, we need a license to drive, to marry, to hunt, to own a gun for Christ sake, and we don’t license parents?

JED
Here, Here!

Dan and Tracy are WHISPERING to each other. Tracy gets up to clear away some of the dishes.

JORI
Dianna sure needed a license.

JO
Jori! I will not have you talking about your sister that way!

JORI
P.J.’s in prison Mother. Just because she’s dead doesn’t make her a martyr.

JO
(to Kent)
You two should have a baby.

Silence.

JO (CONT'D)
You’d make wonderful parents.

MICHELLE
She knows how to poke, doesn’t she?
JORI
And you don’t?

KENT
Mom, we’ve been through this. Cindy and I have decided not to have children.

JO
Well, I will not accept that dog as my grandchild.

DAN
Mom, you don’t have to. He’s a dog.

JORI
Your granddog.

Jo glares at Jori.

KENT
We’re not having children.

MICHELLE
(to Cindy)
Let’s help Tracy clear away these dishes.

JO
But you’re both so smart and beautiful and wonderful.

DAN
Mom, Kent and Cindy are intelligent adults who’ve made a choice. You need to respect their decision.

JO
I do! I just don’t agree with it.

KENT
Then let it rest.

JORI
It’s a moot point Mom. He’s had the big V. Those little spermies aren’t going on any more pleasure cruises.
Michelle and Cindy are at kitchen door with dishes in hand.

JO
Cindy, tell him he’s being --

Cindy
I’m staying out of this.

MICHELLE
We’re going to let you Scooleys battle it out. Current and future in-laws are taking refuge in the kitchen.

She opens the door, both go through and the door swings shut.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tracy is rinsing dishes and putting them in the dishwasher. Cindy pours some wine for herself while Michelle stacks dishes on the counter. She points to wine glasses in drying rack.

MICHELLE
Like me to dry these?

TRACY
You can dry whatever you’d like to dry. Drying is just a progression of time and time is infinite so the dishes will get dried in time.

Michelle looks bewildered. Cindy drinks.

MICHELLE
I take that as a yes.

CINDY
I needed that.

MICHELLE
I bet.

CINDY
She just won’t let it go. She talks and talks.
TRACY
Who’s that?

MICHELLE
Your future mother-in-law.

TRACY
I’m glad you’re not breeding.
Non-breeders unite!

CINDY
I’ll drink to that.

MICHELLE
You’re lucky to be free from Jo on your doorstep every other month showering your kids with gifts, doing your laundry and fucking smooching all over your husband. It would help limit her trips to my house.

CINDY
(with implication)
You don’t think I’ve sacrificed for my husband?
(beat)
We all make choices, Michelle. Having kids means I’d have to grow up and I don’t want to grow up. Kent and I are having too much fun.

Cindy toasts and then takes a swig. She smiles.

MICHELLE
Fuck, I didn’t mean --

CINDY
No, we never mean anything do we? Oh, let’s get off it. That’s why we came in here, isn’t it?

TRACY
I thought you came in to help me.

Cindy is not amused.
INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

People are scattered around the room as Tracy plays with a remote. Music is fading in and out, going fast, then slow. Scooley, Michelle and the girls, in nightgowns, enter.

DAN
Um, we have prepared for you a good night performance. Please sit down.

The girls sit down in front of the couch as Scooley and Michelle take the wing chairs.

DAN, JED and JORI
Glamour first, Glamour last, Glamour always. Hit it Quincy!

Tracy hits the Karaoke machine and The Supreme’s "A Lover’s Concerto" begins to play. Jed plays Diana Ross. Dan and Jori stand behind as The Supremes. Tracy has the video camera running.

JED
(sings)
How gentle is the rain that falls softly on the meadow. Birds, high up in the trees serenade the flowers with their melody. Oh, oh, oh --

MICHELLE
Oh, God.

JED
(sings)
See there beyond the hill the bright colors of a rainbow --

JORI
And step and turn and fan and --

Dan LAUGHS and missteps.

JED
(sings)
Some magic from above made this day for us just to fall in love.
Jo takes a picture. Tracy takes a picture while still filming. Jo turns and takes a picture of everyone watching.

KENT
(to Cindy)
Oh, Jesus. He’s marrying mom!

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jed’s voice is replaced by Diana Ross’s. Michelle and Scooley tuck Allison and Olivia into air mattress at foot of bed.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Diana Ross continues to sing. Cindy and Kent are enjoying cigars. Jori and Jed are talking with them.

INT. ANOTHER GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Jo and Bill are in bed. Jo cannot get comfortable. She has look of pain on her face. She props herself up on her pillows.

JO
I’m fine, I’m okay. Everything will be all right.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan and Tracy are cleaning up, but mostly teasing each other, swatting dishtowels and throwing soapsuds. The song ends.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Scooley, Michelle, Kent, Cindy, Tracy, Dan, Jed and Jori sit around smoking a joint. Everyone is drinking except for Jed who has a glass of water. Michelle and Scooley have Budweisers.

KENT
And in Ohio, you get a slap on the wrist and a $25 dollar fine.
Kent takes a hit.

KENT (CONTD)  
I tell ya, marijuana is not the problem.

He passes the joint to Jori.

CINDY  
It’s mellow and definitely doesn’t induce the violence of cocaine and/or alcohol.

Michelle and Scooley exchange a glance.

JORI  
(smoke in her lungs)  
Plus, it has great medicinal value.

Jori passes joint to Jed.

SCOOLEY  
I know. Michelle uses the seed oil to cure head lice in the girls.

DAN  
I didn’t know that --

MICHELLE  
Dan, it’s fucking Scooley talking. He’s full of crap.

Jori BELLOWS loudly as Cindy and Kent LAUGH. Scooley crinkles up his face at Dan and speaks in falsetto.

SCOOLEY  
Tee hee.

JED  
Why don’t they legalize it?

KENT  
Danny Boy...Danny Boy --

JED  
I mean Prohibition didn’t work for alcohol.
TRACY
That’s all right, you’ve been stressed.

KENT
Hell, the war on drugs is not working. What’s worked is education, teaching responsible behavior, implementing age restrictions —

SCOOLEY
I use the stems as a diuretic when the dogs get constipated not to mention all the rope I use on job sights. Plus —

MICHELLE
Scooley —

JED
There’d be no crime and think of the revenue!

SCOOLEY
...ditch weed is known to ward off certain insects that are destructive to soy beans and corn.

He is becoming more and more boisterous and red in the face. Dan, Cindy, and Jori LAUGH.

MICHELLE
(forcefully)
Okay, Scooley.

SCOOLEY
Blah, blah, blah —

The LAUGHTER dies down. There’s tension in the air.

MICHELLE
Jed, take a hit.

JED
Oh!

JORI
Yeah, ya big bogart!
She slugs him in the arm.

JED
Drugs are drugs - legal and prescribed, illegal and self-prescribed. Everyone’s looking to change their mood through a doctor’s medication or self-medication. We all have our vices.

Jori speaks in a character voice.

JORI
Jed has issues with addiction.

Jed glares at her, then takes a hit.

KENT
I read some big percentage of pot smokers smoked cigarettes first. That pisses me off because Cindy and I never smoked.

JED
It was hell quitting.

CINDY
It’s not really a stepping stone drug either. All we do is pot...and wine.

Michelle and Scooley exchange another glance.

TRACY AND DAN
(sing)
Don’t bogart that joint my friend pass it over to me.

JORI
We all saw what smoking did to Dianna and Mom.

JED
Here all ready!

MICHELLE
Shit. I don’t want those fucking gross-ass wrinkles around my lips.
SCOOLEY
If they legalize all the natural
hallucinogens, Iowa could stop using
the motto, "Land of the Meth Lab".

KENT
Hell yes! What idiot is going to smoke
farm chemicals when you’d have regulated,
inspected, taxed products at your local
convenience store?

Tracy has taken a hit and passed it to Dan.

CINDY
No more Iowa ditch weed, let me tell you!

SCOOLEY
Only the freshest poppies and buds
ripened in the Colombian sun and hand
picked by Juan Valdez.

Everyone LAUGHS. Dan starts to COUGH violently. Tracy pats his
back as everyone LAUGHS harder. Dan passes joint to Michelle.

JED
(sings)
The best part of waking up is cocaine
up your nose.

Jori shakes as if wired.

JORI
Welcome to Colombia, land of the cocoa and
arabica bean. Where the people never sleep.

Everyone is in hysterics because Dan can’t stop LAUGHING and
COUGHING. Jed gets up.

JED
Oh, my God. I’ve got to pee!

MICHELLE
Thanks for the bulletin, Jed. Does he
want an audience or what?
INT. FIRST FLOOR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jed is standing, going to the bathroom. The door flies open and there stands his siblings and their mates CLAPPING and CHEERING. Jed jumps in fright then looks bewildered, irritated and somewhat embarrassed.

    JED
    What are you guys doing? You are so weird!

The door quickly closes, leaving Jed shaking his head.

EXT. SMALL BALCONY OFF BACK OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Jed and Jori are leaning on balcony rail. Soft JAZZ and an occasional burst of LAUGHTER can be heard coming from below.

    JED
    It’s hard, sometimes, with all of us around.

    JORI
    We’re making up for lost time.

    JED
    All trying to say what’s witty.

    JORI
    Be most clever, tell our stories --

    JED
    Make this the ultimate experience --

    JORI
    Yeah...the incomparable Scooley reunion when our brother married another man. Something we’ll tell our kids about, if any of us have any more.

    JED
    I say leave ‘em at school!

Jori LAUGHS.

    JED
    So, how’s Jim?
JORI
Okay.

JED
I know this is going to sound extremely
superficial but --

JORI
He's a short order cook.

JED
With a big penis.

Jori LAUGHS.

JED (CONTD)
And has no aspirations to be anything
but a short order cook.

JORI
Jim is... Jim came along when --

JED
Oprah says it's cyclical.

JORI
What?

JED
Look at it. First there was Lance,
a pompous, arrogant East Coast broker
with a superiority complex and now
there's Jim, a... a --

JORI
Dim-witted uneducated inexperienced
New Hampshire bumpkin with a big penis.

JED
And just as condescending and demeaning.
Remember how Dad used to call Mom "Clyde
the clod".

Jori gives a slight jolt.
JORI
He's not like Dad. Jim just isn't as cultured...Jim is --

JED
Oh, I get it. Jori's molding a penis.

JORI
Stop!

JED
You've said so yourself. You think you can change him like Mom thought she could change Dad.

JORI
Knock it off. I'm not Mom. Jim's a very sweet man, he just hasn't had the experiences...I have so much I want to show him. You know he never went to a Grateful Dead concert?

JED
(sings)
Tragedy, when the feeling's gone and you can't go on, tragedy.

Jori LAUGHS.

JORI
I'm serious.

JED
Okay, show him the wonders of the world but you can't change him. It's cyclical. Mom couldn't change Dad, Grandma couldn't change Grandpa and you --

JORI
Get off it! I won't play into this crap. The sins of my father are not mine! Jim is not Dad! He's honest and caring and good. I want to show him --

Jed bites his lip.
JED
All right! But be careful when molding a penis. Don’t let too much blood go to the brain or he’ll really start thinking for himself. God knows we don’t want to take blood away from where it is vitally needed.

JORI
They’ll never stop thinking with their penises.

JED
Peni?

JORI
Dicks, cocks. Jim calls his “Billy the Club”. Do you have a name for yours?

JED
Jori! No, but Greedy might work. Why do men name their pe...dicks?

JORI
Because they want to know the name of who they’re doing ninety percent of their business with.

Scooley WHISPERS from below.

SCOOLEY
Jori! Come here! There’s a song I want you to hear!

MICHELLE(O.S.)
Phil, be quiet! You’ll wake the whole fucking house!

JED
She swears way too much.

JORI whispers down to yard.

JORI
Okay, we’re coming.

JORI turns away from rail.
JORI (CONTD)
Now there’s an expertly molded, pussy whipped penis.

JED
The girls will be potty mouths.

JORI
The only thing that prevents Michelle from being trailer trash is her degree.

JED
Dan’s being molded, too.

JORI
Not by an expert though. By a psycho.
I have to pee.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT
Jori comes out of bathroom and heads to stairs to go down. Her eye catches something through the balcony French doors.

EXT. BALCONY OFF FRONT OF HOUSE - NIGHT
Jori comes out of bathroom and heads to stairs to go down. Her eye catches something through the balcony French doors.

JORI
Jed? Oh! Mom!

Jo is in corner of balcony with her back to Jori. She quickly snubs out a cigarette and tosses it over.

JO
Oh! You scared me. I, I couldn’t sleep so I --

JORI
I smell smoke.

JO
No! I was getting some fresh air.

JORI
Don’t insult me. I’m not a child!
I smell smoke!
Then your nose must be out of joint!

Please, don’t lie.

I’m not lying. I haven’t smoked since my surgery.

Blatantly lying! You haven’t quit! You haven’t given up the very evil that took your lung!

Keep your voice down. You’ll wake the girls.

Jori speaks in a heated WHISPER.

Mom, I realize that you’re an adult, alone with no excuses, but you can’t assume --

Then don’t lecture me.

...the damage is done. You have to work to make sure the damage stays undone!

Jo’s face remains expressionless but her eyes show she knows her daughter is right.

It’s no worse than the yawkdy-dawk you smoke.

Okay, I understand. I have no right to tell you how to live your life.

You got it.
JORI
I think you’re insane! Hello! Dianna is dead from lung cancer. You have one lung! She smoked. You smoke. There are parallels!

JO
I’m not going to die.

JORI
Well that’s a healthy attitude, but not when you keep smoking.

JO
I am not going to die.

JORI
The tobacco industry has cast my mother into slavery and the clutches of death.

JO
Oh, don’t be so melodramatic. I came out here to get some fresh air, not be lectured. Goodnight.

JORI
Mom, just promise you’ll try to quit. We’ll get you the patch.

JO
I have the patch.

JORI
Well, why aren’t you wearing it? Put it on for me tomorrow. Please.

Jori is on the verge of tears. Jo hugs Jori.

JO
(soothing)
Okay, Jellybean I’ll put it on tomorrow.

Jo starts SINGING quietly, bouncing slightly up and down.

JO (CONT'D)
Jellybean, Jellybean, Mamma’s little Jellybean - -
INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Tracy sits in front of several computer screens in a small room off the master bedroom. Kent stands behind her. On the screens are live shots of rooms in house, including the den.

TRACY
So you’ve got the den, the entry, the living room and the kitchen.

Kent’s mouth is open.

TRACY (CONTD)
I first put them in to make sure Dan’s friends don’t steal anything when they take care of the dogs.

KENT
And...and you have one in every room?

TRACY
Yeah. I like to watch. (laughs)
Nah, just down on the first floor and here in our bedroom. They’re ain’t nothin’ valuable in the guestrooms.

TRACY
Hey, look at this.

Tracy punches keys on the keyboard and the screens begin to change one by one. The screen with the den goes blank.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Jori rushes into the room and is visibly distraught.

JORI
You guys! I just caught Mom smoking.

SCOOLEY
Oh, Fuck.

JED
Just now?
JORI
Yes, just now! I thought you were out on the balcony but Mom was out there.

Dan speaks into his walkie-talkie.

DAN
Tracy, can you and Kent come down?

TRACY (O.S.)
We're on our way, Batgirl.

Kent enters followed by Tracy, who's filming with his camcorder. Kent senses something is wrong.

KENT
What's up?

JORI
I just caught Mom smoking.

Jed puts his head in his hands. Tracy has not been listening. He puts video camera inches from Kent. Kent looks at him.

KENT
Would you turn that damn thing off!??

Kent puts his hand out to cover the lens.

DAN
Tracy, honey, turn it off for a while.

A bit hurt, Tracy turns camera off.

KENT
Did you confront her?

JORI
Yes, I confronted her!

SCOOLEY
What did she say?

JORI
She denied it.
KENT
Of course she denied it! She’s the master of denial. She’s made denial an art form!

JED
All I remember is Mom at the dining room table smoking a cigarette with Dianna in the bedroom, dead from smoking.

TRACY
The reflection in the mirror was clouded by smoke.

Everyone except Dan is exasperated by this remark.

KENT
What the hell do we do now?

Everyone looks to Dan.

DAN
Oh, all right. I’ll talk to her, but I doubt it’ll do any good. Mom’s going to do what she wants.

MICHELLE
She’ll listen to you.

KENT
Like a brick wall!

Kent storms out. The kitchen door can be heard SLAMMING.

CINDY
I think that’s my cue.

She rises and leaves. Jori plops down next to Michelle.

JORI
She’s going to die.
(hopeful)
She said she’d put her patch on tomorrow.

TRACY
We’re all going to die.
Michelle glares at him, as she puts her arm around Jori.

MICHELLE
Oh, honey. That’s good. We’ll just make sure she keeps that patch on.

JED
And with that, I’m going to bed. Good night everyone.

DAN
Night.

SCOOLEY
Goodnight, Jedder.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT
Jori, Dan and Tracy are in kitchen making snacks.

JORI
Thanks again for the loan.

TRACY
You should be talking to me.

Jori looks baffled. Dan smiles and nods.

JORI
Uh, Thanks for the loan.

TRACY
I’ll tack it on to what you already owe and we’ll keep the payment plan the same, okay?

Jori nods her head never taking her eyes off Dan.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT
Scooley, Michelle, Kent and Cindy sit around a table by the pool. Michelle and Scooley are drinking beer. Jori sits at the side of the pool with her feet dangling in the water.
MICHELLE
I don’t know what he sees in him. He’s a fucking idiot.

CINDY
I’m beginning to think he’s a cunning idiot.

JORI
A cunning house boy.

KENT
He controls Dan’s money and now he’s got the whole house under surveillance. That room’s like mission control with monitors and shit. Dan’s a fool!

Scooley spots camera on side of house.

SCOOLEY
Oh, shit! There’s a camera out here!

KENT
Who gives a fuck! Everybody wave to Tracy.

They all wave, LAUGHING.

CINDY
(to Jori)
It’s a wonder any of us got accepted into the Scooley clan.

KENT
Dan hasn’t been the same since he started taking those meds. He zones out.

Speaks in falsetto with glazed over eyes.

Kent (CONT'D)
Like I could paint pretty pictures of trees and flowers with my lover Tracy in the HAPPY, HAPPY, prozac land.

JORI
Dan’s so smart. Why can’t he see Tracy’s using him?
CINDY
He has no self-esteem.

MICHELLE
(to Scooley)
Sweetheart, talk to him. Tell him he’s being a fucking fool.

SCOOLEY
I don’t know what good that’ll do. He’s like Mom. He’ll do what he wants.

MICHELLE
He’ll listen to you.

Scooley rolls his eyes.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan and Tracy are in bed. Dan rolls over onto his back, his eyes open. Tracy wakes up and puts his arm over Dan’s chest.

TRACY
(sleepily)
Wedding jitters?

DAN
No. I’m upset about Mom.

TRACY
Don’t worry. She’ll come around.

DAN
I’m tired of being the damn family counselor. Scooley and Michelle use me as their couple’s therapist, Jed relays every escapade he’s ever had, Jori borrows money right and left --

TRACY
They know you’ll do the right thing.

DAN
I’m not a saint.
TRACY
But they trust you and that’s pretty close.

Dan kisses Tracy on the forehead.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM – NIGHT

Cindy is in bed. Kent is wandering around the room, picking up objects, searching for a hidden camera.

CINDY
Come on. You’ve searched everywhere. There’s no hidden camera. He can’t be that insane, plus he’s gay. He’ll record over us having sex.

Kent doesn’t respond, but keeps looking. Cindy rolls over.

INT. DEN – NIGHT

Scooley, Michelle and Jori sit on couches.

MICHELLE
Why are they doing this? It’s not even legal.

JORI
They want everyone to know they’re committed.

MICHELLE
You know, I’m okay with gays, but why do they have to flaunt it?

JORI
Well, Michelle --

MICHELLE
Hey! Hey! I think Kent’s having an affair.

JORI
What? You’re kidding!

MICHELLE
No! When they were out for Thanksgiving, (MORE)
MICHELLE (CONT'D)
he just kept going on and on about this woman. Going to Packers games together and driving down to Chicago for White Sox games. You remember, Scooley.

Scooley
Yeah, I don’t know... I thought maybe they were sports buddies and she just happened to be a woman.

MICHELLE
Come on, you were there! It wasn’t just a sports thing. And poor Cindy, smiling the whole time saying how glad she was she didn’t have to go anymore.

Jori
No! They’re like green eggs and ham!

MICHELLE
It’s true!

Scooley
Well --

MICHELLE
Come on, Scooley. You saw it! I’m not imagining things. You know I’m right.

Scooley
Yeah, you’re probably right!

Jori
I refuse to believe it!

EXT. POOL - DAY

The following morning. Kent and Jed are in running attire, stretching. Bill comes out the back door, carrying a recycling bin. Dan can be heard calling from inside.

Dan (O.S.)
Thanks, Bill, for taking out the recycling.
BILL
(to Kent and Jed)
I counted 49 beer cans. Somebody had a party.

JED
He has nothing better to do?

KENT
Somebody needs to get a hobby.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Cindy is sitting at the island, her freedom bag open in front of her, drinking coffee and doing her nails. A Barbie sits on the counter’s edge. Jori comes down the back steps into the kitchen, still in her nightshirt and is rubbing her eyes.

JORI
(groggy)
Hey.

Cindy doesn’t look up from her nails.

CINDY
Good morning.

Jori gets coffee and does a double take when she spots the Barbie sitting in front of Cindy. Donuts, juice, plates, cloth napkins, and flowers are on the counter as well.

JORI
Geez! Did Dan do this?

CINDY
Yes, the anal-retentive sweetheart.

JORI
Martha Stewart does not exist. She’s just a cardboard cut-out acting as a front for the hundred gay men behind her doing all the work.

Cindy LAUGHS while Jori takes a long swig of coffee.
Cindy?

CINDY

Hmmm?

JORI

Cindy --

Cindy looks up from her nails.

JORI (CONT'D)
Now, don't be offended, but last night...well, Scooley and Michelle think Kent is having an affair.

CINDY

What?

She LAUGHS heartily, knowingly

JORI
And I absolutely refused to believe it.

CINDY
That's so absurd.

JORI
I mean, you two are a matched set.

CINDY
They don't even know who we are.

JORI
I didn't think it was true.

CINDY
They never call --

JORI
They complain about me not calling.

CINDY
...or answer our e-mails.
JORI
And they're worse than me.

CINDY
What a deal!

Her eyes twinkle.

CINDY (CONT'D)
Well --

JORI
Cindy, what?

CINDY
You can't tell Michelle and --

Cindy stops as Scooley comes bounding down the back stairs, his hair is wet from a shower, holding a joint and lighter in his hand. Cindy and Jori exchange a glance.

SCOOLEY
(whispering excitedly)
Wake-n-bake, wake-n-bake, wake-n-bake!

JORI
Where's Mom and Bill?

CINDY
They took the girls and the dogs for a walk.

Michelle calmly enters behind Scooley. Her hair and make-up have been done. Cindy quickly hides the Barbie in her freedom bag. Scooley lights up. Michelle whacks him.

MICHELLE
Scooley, go outside! I don't want your Mom and Bill coming back and smelling pot.

JORI
Somebody's been smokin' mary-wanna.

CINDY
Don't worry, I have some air freshener.
Pulls some from her Freedom Bag.

CINDY (CONT'D)
Couple of squirts and you’re in a lemon grove.

SCOOLEY
Cool!

MICHELLE
I’m... At least open the damn door and blow out!

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

Jed comes running up the drive, sweating and panting. Kent follows behind, a little more tired. He bends over putting his hands on his knees as Jed begins to stretch.

KENT
Fuck. I thought we agreed on a slow pace.

Jed LAUGHS. Pause.

JED
Kent? I’m scared. I don’t want to go through it again.

KENT
Get prepared.

JED
I heard Mom this morning in the bathroom. She was, like, chanting. She was saying ‘I’m okay, I’m fine. Everything will be all right. I’m okay, I’m fine’ over and over again.

KENT
(quoting Jo)
"If you put your mind to it --"

JED AND KENT
...you can do anything."
They CHUCKLE.

JED
Her Mantra. Jeez, Mom and the power of positive thinking. God, I hope it works.

Kent winces.

KENT
I'm beginning to show my age.

JED
Yeah!

KENT
Asshole.

JED
I spent my life running after you. Let me have my moment.
   (beat)
Water, I need water.

Jed heads up porch steps. Kent stays behind to stretch.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

MICHELLE
He's been using condoms with all these guys, right?

JORI
I think so. Jed would tell me. He tells me everything.

Jed is heard in hall. They all hush.

JED (O.S.)
Water. Water.

Jed enters and heads to refrigerator. Everyone watches him.

JED
Water! Hey.
Jed pours water and notices his family’s big stupid grins.

JED
You’re stoned. Well, where’s my hit?

MICHELLE
Please.

SCOOLEY
Oh. Uh —

He searches his stash box for remainder of joint.

JED
(sings)
What about me? It isn’t fair. Now, I don’t have enough and I want my share. Can’t you see —

JORI
What? That you take more than you give? We see that.

Jed glares at her as he takes joint from Scooley.

JED
Please.

MICHELLE
That’s better.

Jed takes a hit and speaks with smoke in his lungs.

JED
I don’t think I take more than I give.

JORI
I was just kidding.

MICHELLE
Well, you “little ones” are put to a different standard than Phil, Dan or Kent.

CINDY
You’re right about that.
MICHELLE
At Christmas, she didn’t offer to help with our plane tickets. We have kids.

SCOOLEY
It isn’t cheap to fly.

JORI
Obviously, you have some issues with Mom helping Jim and I.

MICHELLE
Well, you could afford to go to Aspen three months later, didn’t tell anyone and got caught.

JORI
I didn’t tell anyone because I didn’t tell anyone. Not because I was afraid of getting “caught”.

(laughs)
That damn earthquake in LA.

SCOOLEY
Mom called us at 5 a.m.

(imitating Jo)
This is your only mama. Where’s my Jellybean?

Jed LAUGHS. Kent enters, walks to fridge to get water.

MICHELLE
It isn’t funny. You lied to everyone.

JORI
No, I just didn’t tell anyone. Although, it’s fair to say I haven’t been very practical with my money.

JED
Listen – –

He hands joint to Kent who waves it off.

KENT
Fuck no. I need a few hours.
Jed looks at joint, then lays it in box.

JORI
But I’m not going to take the blame for what Mom chooses to do with her money.

JED
Listen. You guys had already left when Dad quit drinking and then turned around and left Mom for Margaret.

SCOOLEY
Oh, here’s the excuse.
(rolls eyes. jibes)
Oh...Uh-huh...sure...a likely story.

JED
We were 12 and 10! She tried to make up for what we didn’t have.

MICHELLE
(joining Scooley)
Sure...uh-huh...we believe you.

JORI
And being stupid teenagers we took advantage of Mom’s guilt.

JED
(sings)
I second that emotion.

MICHELLE
You were spoiled long before then.

SCOOLEY
Oh, you poor wretched children, how could you have endured such hardship. Wait, we must save you.

He puts hand on Jori’s head like a revival preacher.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
We must seek the wisdom of the great wizard himself, Dr. Danny, to expel the issues from your body.
KENT
Or give you Prozac to numb them.

SCOOLEY
To save you from the demons that eat away at your learning po-ten-tial.

CINDY
You can’t blame everything on your childhood.

SCOOLEY
We must save you! Save you! Wait! Shhh!

MICHELLE
What?

Scooley walks to hall door and tiptoes into hall.

CINDY
What’s he doing?

MICHELLE
Hell if I know?

KENT
Hey! Scooley!

Scooley comes tearing into the kitchen.

SCOOLEY
It’s Dad!

Scooley grabs his stash box then Michelle’s hand. They rush up the back stairs as everyone else is left LAUGHING.

JED
He’s joking.

KENT
I didn’t hear anything.

JORI
Don’t go, Kent! It’s a trap. I’m not taking any chances.

Jori grabs mug of coffee and heads upstairs.
JED
Oh, my breath!

Jed follows Jori. Cindy calmly gives the room a few squirts of air freshener, then goes up. Kent YELLS from the hall.

KENT (O.S.)
Just fucking - Dad!

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

PHIL SR. is on porch. He is a short, slight man with a hearing aide and the hint of belly. He’s seen someone through screen door and is calling.

PHIL SR.
Dan! The Iowa Caucus has arrived!

Kent steps out onto porch.

KENT
No, Dad. It’s me, Kent.

PHIL SR.
(startled)
So it is! How are ya doin’, bud?

KENT
Not too bad.

They embrace. MARGARET comes up the porch steps. She’s over a foot taller than her husband and is not fat, but healthy. She coos and sighs when she speaks. She hands Phil Sr. his keys.

MARGARET
Phil, honey, you left your keys in the camper. Kent, dear, Ooooo.

She hugs Kent who is uncomfortable.

PHIL SR.
So I did! In my haste, I plumb forgot them. I’m the hunter of the family and Margaret is the gatherer - the gatherer of my things.
Phil hoots. Kent pulls away from hug.

MARGARET
Oh, Phil.

PHIL SR.
I came close to leaving my “umph” in Amarillo. I just might leave my “heart in San Diego”.

Phil HOOTS again while Margaret COOS adoringly.

KENT
Dad. And if you’re not careful you’ll end up leaving your head at the “Hotel California”.

PHIL SR.
Yeah, right.

He doesn’t get the joke. A car horn SOUNDS. Dan and Tracy have pulled into the drive next to Winnebago, waving. Phil and Margaret turn and head down porch steps.

PHIL SR.
It’s the men of the hour! Hey, Kent, let’s give your brother a —

Phil turns back to porch, but it is empty. He turns back around and CALLS.

PHIL SR. (CONTD)
Hey! Hey! The men of the hour!

INT. ENTRY HALL — DAY

Scooley and Jori jump out at Kent.

KENT
You, fucker!

SCOOLEY
(high pitched)
Tee-hee.
JORI
Did he give you his big AA lecture?

Kent waves past them into the kitchen. Scooley and Jori follow like mischievous elves.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Margaret and Dan are hugging. Tracy pulls wrapped tuxedos on hangers from the trunk, handing some to Phil Sr.

TRACY
We’ve got your tux in there somewhere.

PHIL SR.
It will be a dapper occasion, indeed.

Phil Sr. backs away from the trunk with tuxes in hand and bumps into Dan’s dog. He looks down and greets it.

PHIL SR.
Hey, puppy, nearly knocked --

Phil Sr. looks up to see Jo, Bill, Allison and Olivia, who have returned from their walk. There’s an awkward silence.

PHIL SR.
Jo, Bill, how are ya?

Phil Sr. shakes hands with Bill.

JO
(cold)
Phil.

OLIVIA
Grandma, who’s that?

ALLISON
(scolding)
Grandpa Scooley.

Dan sees that Jo is watching him hug Margaret and pulls away like a guilty child.
JO
(smug)
Olivia, honey, this is your Grandpa Scooley.

Olivia extends her hand.

OLIVIA
Nice to meet you.

PHIL SR.
We've met before, sweet --

JO
That was four years ago, Phil. She was barely three. I doubt she --

Tracy has snapped a picture of Jo, Phil Sr. and Olivia. Dan quickly comes over.

DAN
Livy, this is your Dad's dad, my dad.

ALLISON
May I go give Char and Casper a doggie biscuit?

OLIVIA
Can I too?

TRACY
Sure.

DAN
They're in the --

The girls are on the run with the dogs. Allison CALLS back.

ALLISON
In the broom closet! We've fed them before, Uncle Dan!

Tracy, Bill and Margaret are carrying things up to the house.

PHIL SR.
Yeah, Uncle Dan.
(MORE)
PHIL SR. (CONT'D)
Four years. It's been that long since Dianna...?

JO
How can you forget?

Phil Sr. just looks perplexed.

DAN
Put those on the hall tree, Dad.

MARGARET
Phil, honey.

PHIL SR.
(jumps slightly)
Yeah, right!

Phil Sr. walks to Margaret on lawn.

JO
What can I take in, Dan'l Boone?

Dan watches his father for a moment, then looks in trunk.

DAN
Let's see.

Jo whispers heatedly as Dan hands her a package.

JO
That's your father. So wrapped up in himself he can't see past the end of his nose. And look at her! B! F! M!

DAN
Mom!

JO
That's what she is. Big Fat Margaret.

JO
When yaz nose to nose yaz toes are in it and when your toes to toes yaz nose is in it. And that's all I'll say.
She walks away as Dan shuts the trunk.

FRONT PORCH - DAY

Tracy comes out of front door, visibly irritated. Dan follows him, WHISPERING heatedly.

DAN
You had all week to get the rings.
I asked you to clean the house and get the rings. That was it. I ended up frantically cleaning the house Thursday morning before Mom and Bill got here. What did you do all week? I’m not about to go --

TRACY
Yeah, yeah.

Tracy gets into mini-van. Dan stands at the car door.

DAN
I have to stay and get things set up.
I can’t believe --

TRACY
Listen, I’m as good as you’re ever gonna get. Take it or leave it.

Dan submits, lowering his eyes to the pavement.

DAN
I know. Tracy --

TRACY
Good. Now, get off my case.

DAN
Honey, when you get your mom, please --

Tracy speeds off leaving Dan standing in the road.

DAN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
...be nice.
The family is preparing for the reception. Two WORKMEN set up chairs and tables on the patio, which is partially covered by wood latticework. Scooley and Phil Sr. hang lights.

Dan walks by Jed and Jori, who are unwrapping water lilies and placing them in the pool.

Jori
Dan, they’re all floating to one corner.

Dan
I need to get Tracy to shut off the pump.

Dan’s cell phone RINGS. He pulls it off his belt and answers.

Dan
Hello? Tracy, where are you? What do you mean the van broke down?...Where are you? The 405! You were supposed to get it serviced...Did you pick up your mom? The rehearsal is at six, Can you -- Now, don’t yell. Do you want me...Okay.

Dan walks away from the pool.

Dan (Contd)
Well, get here as soon as you can, huh? The reservations are at 7:30.

Addressing the two workmen.

Dan (Contd)
Perfect, ten chairs around each table.

Jori
Some house boy! He can’t even remember to fix the cars.

INT. GAZEBO - DAY

A large, screened-in gazebo sits near the pool. Inside there is a TV and a large sectional loaded with pillows. Dan and Kent are working with the stereo system.
DAN
Here's the list of songs Tracy's written down.

Dan hands Kent the list. Kent looks at list, but says nothing.

DAN (CONTD)
They're numbered in the order they are supposed to go. The starred ones are the ones where something happens — the dollar dance, the cutting of the cake, the best couple's toast . . .

KENT
Yeah, sure.

DAN
You've got the remote. Pause it right after the song before. Everyone doing something will have a list so they'll know what to do.

Kent shakes his head, amused.

DAN
What?

KENT
Man, you're anal! I say that as a loving brother.

DAN
Stop. I just want it to be perfect.

KENT
And you can't help it, so it'll be perfect.

DAN
Thanks. I think.

Dan picks up his clipboard and looks at it.

DAN (CONTD)
Can you handle it?

KENT
No problem. Go make it pretty.
Dan lovingly jabs Kent and leaves, calling out instructions to Scooley and Phil Sr. Kent looks at the paper.

KENT
What the hell is this crap? Can’t change the starred ones, but I can sure as hell throw in a few descent tunes.

Kent tosses paper aside then goes about looking at CD’s.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Dan is helping Scooley and Phil Sr. Tracy enters through the gate.

TRACY
Here are the damn rings!

He slams them on a table then storms inside.

MARY SCARLETTI and her daughter, MONIQUE, enter through the gate. Mary is thin and frail and hard looking. She has had her epiglottis removed so it is hard for her to talk and swallow. Monique, Tracy’s twin, has dyed crimson hair and is outrageously dressed.

DAN
Dad, Scooley, this is Tracy’s mom, Mary - -

PHIL SR.
Nice to know you.

MARY
Hello.

DAN
And this is Tracy’s sister Monique.

Monique buttons a button on Phil Sr.’s shirt.

PHIL SR.
Uh, nice to meet you.

Monique pulls a string off Scooley’s shoulder.
Hi.

Monique begins to primp herself, straightening her skirt and brushing off her blouse.

MARY
We’ll put our bags in the house, then you can tell us what needs to be done.

Dan follows Mary into house.

DAN
I think we’ll need help with the place cards.

Monique follows swaying and humming and twirling her skirt. Phil Sr. and Scooley stare.

EXT. POOL – DAY

Scooley and Kent are trying to shut the pump off.

KENT
Where the hell is he? He drops his mother off and then shuts himself up in the bedroom. He’s a fucking fruitcake. He should be doing this.

He looks at the camera on the side of the house.

SCOOLEY
I think I got it.

EXT. PATIO – DAY

Cindy, Jori and Michelle sit at a table folding place cards. Mary, Jo and Monique walk about placing cards on the tables.

CINDY
We planned our honeymoon months in advance, not the day before. Poor Danny. He looks so frantic.
MICHELLE
If he's supposed to be running
the house, he's not doing --

Michelle is cut off as Mary and Jo approach table for more
cards. Mary carries an unlit cigarette. Jo has her camera
around her wrist.

CINDY
Mrs. Scarletti --

MARY
Please, Mary.

CINDY
We were just saying how harrowing
it must have been when the van broke
down on the highway today.

MARY
Oh, no. Tracy had it fixed in no time.
He's such a jack of all trades.

Mary takes some cards and moves on.

JORI
Yes, jack of all and master of none.

Cindy ribs Jori. Jo glares at her then turning, follows Mary.
Monique comes to the table for more cards.

MICHELLE
Now, Monique, what is it you do?

MONIQUE
Nothing. I'm on disability.

CINDY
Oh, an accident on the job?

Monique dances and sways as she speaks.

MONIQUE
I was supposed to be on these little
cream pills and I'd forget to take
(MORE)
MONIQUE (CONTD)
them and then I couldn’t find my way to work.
(giggles)
Or get back home. That’s why Tracy and Danny came and got me and brought me out here. So Tracy can call and remind me to take my --

Monique looks down at the cards in her hand then moves away.

JORI
Where there’s one fruitcake --

CINDY
Jori!

Michelle’s mouth drops open.

Mary and Jo place cards on a table.

JO
Tracy’s been up there a long time. I can’t imagine what he’s doing up there.

MARY
I wouldn’t know. I try to stay out of their lives.

JO
Well, we sure could use his help. I wonder if someone should go up.

Mary doesn’t respond. Jo turns and walks back to the table where Cindy, Michelle and Jori are. She puts her cards down.

JO
If nobody else is going to do it.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Tracy sits in the middle of the floor surrounded by boxes, piles of electronic pieces and memorabilia. Jo KNOCKS on the door as she opens it.
JO
Tracy? What in the world are you doing?

TRACY
Here's the remote I'm going to rig up to turn on all the computers.

JO
What?

TRACY
Oh, and here's the nutcracker I picked up while hiking through Germany.

JO
Couldn't this wait? Dan could use your help downstairs.

TRACY
I really need to get these in order.

JO
We need to get the patio done. The rehearsal is in less than two hours.

(beat)
Now, I've been very polite but I'm about to give you a piece of my mind. You need to come down --

TRACY
Nobody tells me what to do. You've got to understand I'm not a man who lives by means of pressure. Now where's that adapter?

JO
Listen here, Dan is downstairs running around like a chicken with its head cut off and you're up here doing God knows what. He needs your help. So what you're going to do --

TRACY
Hey, I'm here doing this because nobody tells me what to do. That's where I'm at, man. I'm the antithesis, man. I'm the opposite.
JO
Where you're at, man, is in the midst of a childish temper tantrum.

TRACY
Listen, man, I do what I want.

JO
Well, do you want to marry my son?

TRACY
I believe I do.

JO
Then I suggest you go help him get ready for your committed event.

TRACY
Commitment ceremony. I feel Dan's urgency. I feel his need, but it just makes me want to stay in here.

JO
What you want and what you get are two different things. Marriage is work. People expect things from the ones they love.

TRACY
Everyone expects me to do everything.

JO
Oh, you poor baby. If you haven't learned this, you need to learn it now; nothing comes without strings. With this ring comes a lot of expectations. I expect Bill to mow the lawn and he expects me to cook. And we both expect each other to take care of one another. This committed, ceremonial wedding thingy is not a romp in the hay. You're going to have to do things you don't want to.

TRACY
I respect you as a mother, as a goddess of Mother Earth, and for that reason I will take your advice.
JO
My advice to you is to go help before I kick your fanny to Timbuktu and back.

Tracy reluctantly stands and walks to door.

TRACY
Thank you for allowing me insight into a world as experienced, enlightened and wise as yours.

JO
Yes, well...Here, let’s take your picture. On the day before your wedding do-hicky.

Tracy smiles and Jo takes his picture. He leaves.

JO
Oh, Danny.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Bill and Jori are getting in Cadillac on driver’s side. Jed is on the passenger side. Jo comes down the steps.

JORI
Hurry, Mom. Everyone’s left.

Jo reaches passenger side.

JED
Bill bought you a fabulous car, Mom.

JO
Like I’ve always said, “First time love, second time money”.

She LAUGHs like a child, flashing Jed her huge diamond ring. Jed looks sorry but joins in.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Mary stands smoking a cigarette on the patio of the Hotel Del Coronado. Jo comes out of the hotel and joins her.
JO
Oh, what a party!

MARY
Too noisy.

JO
Could I have one?

Mary looks to Jo who is pointing at the cigarette.

MARY
Oh, sure.

Mary hands Jo a cigarette and lights it for her. Jo inhales.

JO
Thanks. I needed that. They haven't let me alone all day.

Mary looks at her.

JO
I'm a closet smoker. I had a lung removed. My kids throw hissy fits. Hell, Bill does, too.

MARY
I had my epiglottis removed. Doctors had to teach me how to swallow without getting food in my lungs. Almost died twice inhaling lime Jello.

JO
Monique and Tracy don't get on you to stop?

MARY
Yes, and your son, too. Every time they start in, I tell 'em to go look in the mirror. They have enough problems of their own then to be trying to fix mine.

JO
Here, here.
MARY
Twenty-seven years of marriage with their father, gives me the right to do whatever I damn well please!

Mary snubs out her cigarette. Jo fondles her wedding band.

JO
Twenty-five and six. Thirty-one all together. Ho! Ho! I have a huge right.

MARY
Enjoy it, honey. You earned it. I need to use the little girl's room so - -

JO
Sure. Thanks for the cigarette.

Mary nods and enters hotel. Jo takes a drag. Voices are heard coming toward the patio. Jo quickly hides behind some bushes beside the patio.

Dan and Scooley enter from the Hotel. Scooley lights a cigar.

DAN
I love it out here.

SCOOLEY
Yeah. Dan?

DAN
Yeah?

SCOOLEY
Well...uh, are you doing okay?

DAN
Yes, I'm fine. Why?

SCOOLEY
It's just, well...we're worried about you.

DAN
Worried? Why? I'm fine. I've never been so - -

Dan's walkie-talkie on his belt CRACKLES.
It's Tracy.

...happy. Tracy? What's he got to do...?

Are you sure he's the right guy for you?

Of course!

Dan, he doesn't have a job, he's spending your money.

Oh, I see!

He was living in public --

It's because Tracy's a man.

...housing. Huh? No!

If this were a woman, no one would care if she didn't have a job and stayed home to --

This is not 1950.

What? Michelle's not Donna Reed?

She's raising our kids and as soon --

Since Tracy and I don't have kids we're less of a family?
Scooley
No! We’re barely scraping by as it is and as soon as Olivia is ten, Michelle will go back to – –

Dan
What is wrong with me wanting to have someone do my laundry, cook my meals, and clean my house if I have the income to support us both?

Michelle joins them.

Michelle
Hey. I was just coming out to see what’s going on.

Dan
I’m getting married tomorrow and your husband is questioning my choice of partners?

Michelle
Well Danny, you haven’t had a very good track record.

Dan
I have never criticized any of my siblings’ choices of partners. I have accepted and embraced them all.

Michelle laughs.

Dan (cont’d)
When I want your advice, I’ll ask you for it, so until then, kindly stay out of my personal life.

Dan turns to go back in.

Michelle
Danny, wait.

The walkie-talkie crackles again.
TRACY (O.S.)
Hey, Danny boy! Where are you? We’re gonna pass out our gifts for the wedding party.

Dan addresses Scooley and Michelle.

DAN
You don’t trust me. I don’t have time for this. If you want your gifts you’d better come in.

Dan goes inside. Jo comes onto the patio.

JO
I’d say that went over like a lead balloon.

Michelle and Scooley wonder where she came from.

JO (CONTD)
Take it from someone who knows. Never grab a man by the balls when he has an erection. It just makes him want it more.

She walks back into the hotel.

EXT. DECK OF FERRY - NIGHT

Mary, Monique, Bill, Dan, Tracy, Cindy, Kent, Michelle and Scooley sit on benches. Jed, Allison, Olivia, Jori and Jo are at the rail watching the shoreline. Phil Sr. and Margaret sit among other WEDDING PARTY MEMBERS and STRANGERS. Jed is SINGING, pretending to be a cruise ship passenger.

JED
(sings)
The Love Boat, soon will be making another run. The Love Boat, promises something for everyone. Set a course for adventure --

OLIVIA
Aunt Jori? What’s the love boat?
JED
...you’re mind on a new romance.

Jori takes Olivia’s cheeks in her hands.

JORI
A TV show so horrific I’ve tried to block the trauma out of my mind. But Jed refuses to let me!

Jed ignores Jori and SINGS to Allison.

JED
(sings)
And love, won’t hurt anymore. It’s an open smile - -

ALLISON
You’re weird, Uncle Jed.

JO
It was a good show. I liked it.

JORI
He is weird, huh?

JED
Oh you know you watched it!
(sings)
on a friendly shore.
(speaks quickly)
And Fantasy Island too!
(sings with vibrato)
The Love boat!

JORI
NO!

JED
Olivia, it was a silly show that compacted the complex notion of love into an hour of floating heterosexual nightmares and skewed fantasies of relationships and marriage.
It was about true love!

Mother!

Jed, keep it on an appropriate level.

Noticing that Dan is still pouting about their conversation, Scooley tries to get his attention. He WHISPERS loudly.

Danny.

Scooley makes a face but Dan does not respond.

Danny!

He makes funny NOISES but Dan folds his arms and looks away.

He’s Dan’l Boone, king of the wild frontier!

Dan cracks a smile.

I think it’s Davey Crockett.

You smiled. You smiled. He smiled!

Knock it off Scooley. It won’t work.

What? How can you say that? You?

The little engine that could?

Scooley squishes next to Dan and puts his arm around him.

The boy who I saw beat up the

(MORE)
SCOOLEY (CONTD)
neighborhood bully? You exude the energy and strength of the Titans. You are Dan the Man.

KENT
(chanting)
Dan the Man, Dan the Man, Dan the Man --

SCOOLEY
You have the ability! The power to smile!

Scooley is gently swaying with Dan who is loosening up. Jed, Jori and Cindy join Kent’s CHANTING.

ALL
Dan the Man, Dan the Man, Dan the Man --

Dan finally smiles.

DAN
Okay, Scooley.

SCOOLEY
The will to enjoy the essence of life, to bask in the glory of being!

Tracy and Jo join in CHANTING. Bill sits watching, Monique stares blankly but Mary smiles.

SCOOLEY
It will work. It must work. You have the will to be happy. You must be happy. We all must be Happy!

OLIVIA
(singing)
If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands.

Olivia CLAPS.

SCOOOLEY
See? Everybody sing!

Everyone joins in SINGING.
ALL
If you're happy and you know it
clap your hands. If you're happy and
you know it then your face will surely
show it. If you're happy and you know
it clap your hands.

EXT. FERRY - NIGHT

The ferry approaches the dock. The CALLS, YELLS and LAUGHS of
the Scooley family can be heard drifting over the water.

EXT. FERRY - NIGHT

Bill, Monique and Mary watch the spectacle. Phil Sr. and
Margaret sit further away. Everyone else is up, dancing about
SINGING and LAUGHING.

ALL
Oh, yeah I tell you something, I think you’ll
understand. Oh and I say this something,
I wanna hold your hand. I wanna hold your
hand. I wanna hold your hand. I wanna to
hold your hand.

Phil Sr. and Margaret look disgruntled and uncomfortable.

MARGARET
They’re so drunk! Those poor girls.

PHIL SR.
Their fun is self-induced. Lost. Misguided.

Phil Sr. shakes his head self-righteously. The song fades into
the Beatles’ original version as the mad cap scene continues.

EXT. EXIT PLANK OF FERRY - NIGHT

Scooley, Jed and Jori act as flight attendants to the last of
the passengers. Cindy, Kent, and Jo are behind last
passengers. Everyone else is already on shore.
JORI
Bye, bye.

SCOOLEY
Bye, bye.

JED
Thanks for riding Coronado Ferries.

Cindy grabs Jori.

CINDY
We thought it would be fun to go to a dance club.

JORI
Cool.

JO
You have to get up in the morning.

JED
Mom, It’s only ten o’clock. We’ll be home by midnight.

KENT
Yeah, Mom. Please?

Jo gives them a sarcastic look.

INT. GAY BAR - NIGHT
Kent, Cindy, Jori and Jed are on dance floor, dancing.

EXT. BAR PATIO - NIGHT
Kent, Cindy, Jori and Jed are LAUGHING and sweaty. They find a bench.

KENT
Beer?

Jori and Cindy nod. Jed mouths the word water. Kent leaves to go to bar.
JORI
Cindy!

CINDY
What?

JORI
What were you going to tell me this morning?

CINDY
Oh. George and Martha.

JED
See, I didn’t tell her. I can keep my mouth shut.

JORI
You know? What? What?

Jed watches a cute boy go by.

JED
If you’ll excuse me.

Jed gets up and leaves. Jori and Cindy pay no attention.

CINDY
Well, Kent and I answered a personal ad we saw on AOL.

Jori gasps. Cindy laughs nervously.

CINDY
Let me finish. We thought it would be fun to meet another couple, you know — —

JORI
Oh my god, you’re swingers!

CINDY
Shh!

JORI
(screams)
You’re all getting it on, aren’t you?
CINDY
Yes!

JORI
Oh my God! So it’s you and this guy and Kent and and the woman and all of you and you and her, but not Kent and...?

CINDY
Kent and George? No! No!

JORI
Just a little lesbian stuff, huh?

CINDY
(embarrassed)
Yes.

JORI
What a hoot! You’re a woman after my own heart!

EXT. DAN AND TRACY’S HOME - NIGHT

A car pulls up. Jed hops out carrying his shoes and walks across lawn.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jed crawls in next to the sleeping Jori, who wakes up. Her eyes remain closed.

JORI
Did you get Greedy off?

JED
Greedy?

JORI
Your penis.

JED
Oh, yeah.
JORI
You don’t sound too happy about it.

JED
When Anthony and I were together, after sex, we would spoon. I used to match my breathing to his. It was so peaceful. You don’t get that with tricks.

JORI
Yeah, cuddling is the best part of sex.

Jed doesn’t respond. He stares up at the ceiling.

EXT. POOL – MORNING

Dan, in his pajamas, is primping the table arrangements. Phil Sr. comes through the gate, partially dressed in his tuxedo.

PHIL SR.
Magnificent my good son. It shall be a festive occasion indeed.

DAN
Thanks, Dad.

PHIL SR.
And it shall be thrice as festive for me. We are celebrating your ceremony, Phil and Michelle’s eighteenth wedding anniversary and this month marks fifteen years of sobriety for me.

DAN
Dad. Really? Why didn’t you say anything?

PHIL SR.
Hey, this day isn’t about me. It’s about you.

DAN
Congratulations, Dad. I forgot it was in the summer after mom went to the --

Phil Sr. squeezes Dan’s arms.
PHIL SR.
No. This is a festive time. Be happy my son. Make this and everyday count. Be true to yourself. Follow your — —

Phil can’t finish. He embraces Dan. Margaret comes to the gate in her robe, carrying an overnight bag.

MARGARET
Phil, honey, come to the camper and take your pill.

Phil Sr. pulls away from Dan awkwardly.

PHIL SR.
Yeah, right! Don’t want to be more of an emotional sponge.

Phil follows Margaret through the gate while Dan watches them.

INT. CHURCH LOUNGE - DAY

Jo is fixing the back of Dan’s collar while he is trying to put on his cufflinks which he drops.

DAN
Mom!

JO
When your father and I got married my mother said to me, in a situation similar to this — —

She pauses to think.

JO (CONT'D)
Anyway, my mother knew...my mother knew your father was no good.
(baby talks)
But I got all of you babies from my own little baby box, I could never — —

DAN
Mom!
JO
Oh, sorry. Well, you know the rest. I didn’t listen. I was determined to prove them all wrong. I was stubborn.

Dan has found the cufflink and Jo fastens it herself.

JO (CONTD)
Your father could do no wrong. I see more of myself in you than I do in my own daughters. I know the family has expressed their disapproval of Tracy. I try to listen and support all of you. Dan, you’ve always been an overachiever... Oh, my thoughts are all muddled now.

Jo winces in pain, straightening up her back stiffly.

DAN
Mom, are you okay?

He reaches for her but she backs away and sits down.

JO
It’s just a back spasm. I’ve been to the chiropractor three times. He hasn’t gotten it right yet.

Dan sits down next to her.

DAN
Do you want me to rub it?

JO
No, it’ll go away in a minute.

She takes deep breaths. Dan puts his hand on hers.

DAN
I see you’re wearing your patch.

JO
Yes, I’m wearing the patch.
DAN
We’re concerned, Mom, because we love you. We want you to stay healthy and not have any more problems.

JO
I’m all right. I’m okay.

Takes a deep breath.

JO (CONT'D)
Everything’s going to be fine. See. The pain’s gone. You can do anything when you put your mind to it.

DAN
Well, I’m glad to see you’re making healthy choices.

JO
Don’t give me any of that psycho mumbo jumbo! I’m your mother. Save it for your marriage. You’ll need it. Now, here’s my blessing.

She hugs him, making SQUEALING noises.

INT. CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL - DAY

The family is gathered. Margaret is trying to put on Phil Sr.’s boutonniere. Jori walks by.

PHIL SR.
Jori, sweetheart. You look so beautiful.

Phil reaches out and draws Jori to him. She puts her hand on his back and smiles.

JORI
Thank you. You’re looking quite dapper yourself.

Margaret pokes Phil Sr. with the pin.
PHIL SR.
Ouch! Here, I'll do it.

MARGARET
I'm sorry, sweetie. I can do it.

PHIL SR.
No, you can't, you see.

Phil Sr. grabs boutonniere as Jori stares intently at him.

MARGARET
Did you take your pill, honey?

PHIL SR.
Yes. I took my pill.

MARGARET
Relax. Take a deep breath.

PHIL SR.
I am relaxed. There, it's pinned.

Margaret adjusts the flowers. Phil looks again at Jori.

PHIL SR.
You are radiant my child.

Jori smiles awkwardly as she stares intently at her father.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

Scooley, Michelle, Cindy, Kent and Jori stand on one side of the MINISTER dressed in tuxedos and bride's maid gowns. Tracy's party, Monique, a MALE COUPLE and a FEMALE COUPLE stand on the other side. Jed stands holding a sheet of paper. Allison and Olivia walk down the aisle tossing rose petals. Behind them, is Dan flanked by Jo and Phil Sr. Tracy and Mary follow further back. Jed's voice is heard over music. Two WOMEN videotape and photograph the entire ceremony.

JED (O.S.)
Hidden and tucked away in the dark,
(MORE)
JED (CONT'D)
is the muffled song of a glorious lark. Stripped of light by a fool’s sexual game, it is the love that dare not speak its name. Plucked of pride in eons lost, denying divine order at any cost. Forced to nest in murky shade, though together the tree was made.

Dan and Tracy stand before the minister.

JED (CONT'D)
A male and female connect in space and together they begin the social race. Lost in selfish lust they became the only love that speaks its name. A male and male encounter in time and are drawn by a beautiful, different rhyme. They struggle to be seen the same. It is a love that bellows its name.

The minister blesses the couple who kiss.

JED (CONT'D)
Their plumage takes on a vibrant gleam. Divinity has granted all the dream. Ring in the millennium new, with the simple words, “I love you”.

Dan and Tracy are smiling as they walk back down the aisle.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Tracy and Dan come out of the church into the sun with guests seen but not heard cheering on either side.

JED (O.S.)
The lark springs free in glorious flight To find his intended bathed in light. Cheers were heard from those who came, to proclaim Dan and Tracy’s love by name.

The CHEERING guests can be heard as the poem ends. Dan and Tracy get into the limousine, pop up out of the sunroof and take off their boutonnieres. Dan and Tracy kiss then throw their boutonnieres into the crowd.
EXT. DAN’S POOL AND PATIO - EVENING

The CROWD at the reception is lively. “In The Mood” plays.

Jo, Bill, Michelle, Allison and Olivia are sitting at a table. Michelle is helping the girls with their food. Jo is watching Phil Sr. and Margaret at the buffet table.

JO
Look at her! She’s treating him like a child. I can’t get over how much she’s like his mother. Oh, here, Bill.

With her napkin Jo wipes food off the corner of Bill’s mouth.

EXT. PATIO BAR - EVENING

Jed is talking to the male couple from the wedding party.

JED
If I ever did this, I wouldn’t want it to be so...so...heterosexual. Weddings are for them. Let’s think of something different to show our commitment. Maybe something outside, in a circle, more pagan. Anything but pews and bridesmaids.

EXT. RECEPTION AREA - EVENING

Mingling guests, Tracy and his camera, LAUGHING, MUSIC.

PHIL SR.
Honey, uh, I wanted to talk to you --

JORI
Yeah, Dad.

PHIL SR.
You know, this month I’m celebrating 15 years of sobriety and I feel so good.

JORI
Right, I was ten. You were sober for a whole year before you left.
PHIL SR.
Sweetheart, that was a rough time for your old man, but AA has helped me so much. To try to correct wrongs I have committed. I want to help. I worry that you kids may have gotten my compunction for the drink. I just want you to know --

JORI
Wait a minute.
(laughs)
You are taking this moment to lecture me! You’ve got a lot of gull! We don’t even talk to each other.
(starts to cry)
You’ve had no impact in my life whatsoever! Always so wrapped up in yourself you never noticed us kids.

PHIL SR.
Jori, honey, that’s not --

JORI
No excuses! I saw the way you treated mom and I saw how you ignored us “little ones”. How many times did I overhear you tell mom you’d take up more of an interest in us when we were older because then you’d be able to talk to us? I’d dreamed of that day so I could do something with my dad like Dianna or Scooley during one of those too few dry spells. Then you were gone. Gone off with another woman.

PHIL SR.
I tried to see you after --

JORI
You didn’t try hard enough. Oh, I know Mom made it difficult for you. But I didn’t want to see you because of what you did. I believed everything Mom said about you and Margaret.

Phil Sr. puts his head down.
Jori (Contd)
Now at this wedding you choose to resemble a father and tell me that you think my brothers and I may have a drinking problem?! You don't know me. I don't know you, I only remember the man you were and I don't even know if I remember him. Get to know me before you offer me advice.

She walks away.

Ext. Door to House - Evening

Tracy storms out of the kitchen with a music sheet in his hand. He charges for the gazebo. Cindy and Michelle watch.

Int. Enclosed Gazebo - Evening

Tracy enters the gazebo in a huff. Kent is at the stereo checking the song selection.

TRACY
What do you mean changing the music?
Dan gave you a "pacifist" list to follow.
Why the hell did you screw it up?

KENT
Because we're in the 21st century, not the 1970's! Most of us would prefer to leave "Copacabana" where it belongs, on a dusty LP in someone's basement.

TRACY
Those songs were for the toasts and for --

KENT
Don't worry. If you'd looked, all the starred ones are right where they should be. See?

TRACY
Dan will be so pissed if you've --
KENT
What do you mean? Dan hasn’t even noticed.

TRACY
...ruined this for him.

KENT
Me? It’ll be you, you jobless seventies throw back American gigolo, gold-digging leach!

TRACY
Fuck off, asshole.

Tracy turns and storms out.

DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Kent jumps in between Michelle and Scooley who are standing on edge of dance floor talking with Jori. Michelle has her hand on Jori’s back. “Panic” by The Smiths is playing.

KENT
Guys, this song is so fitting right now.

JORI
I love this song.
(sings)
“Burn down the disco. Hang the bloody DJ...”

Jori, Michelle and Scooley dance.

Kent runs over to Dan, who is talking to guest, grabs him and pulls him out onto the dance floor. They dance.

INT. FIRST FLOOR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jed is making out with the male couple in Tracy’s wedding party. They all have their pants down.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Allison and Olivia stand outside the bathroom door.
ALLISON
I’ll go in. You count to ten, then knock. Then I’ll answer the door. Okay?

Olivia nods. Allison opens the door. Michelle is bent over the sink with a rolled up dollar in her nostril. Scooley, who is sitting on the toilet lid, stands immediately, blocking Allison’s view of her mother.

SCOOLEY
We’ll be out in a minute, sweetheart.

Allison shuts the door. The door CLICKS locked.

MICHELLE (O.S.)
I told you to lock the damn door!

OLIVIA
What?

ALLISON
Mom and dad are in there.

Allison walks quickly away. Olivia follows.

INT. DAN AND TRACY’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tracy films the carpet. Cindy enters and he looks up.

CINDY
Oh, I’m sorry. The downstairs bathroom was occupied and so is this one, so I came --

TRACY
Fine, fine, whatever.

Cindy sits down next to him, but slightly away.

CINDY
You know, Dan’s okay with the music change.

Tracy zig-zags camera around then up to focus on Cindy’s face.
TRACY
I've try so hard to get you all to like me.

CINDY
Maybe that's the problem.

TRACY
Huh?

Cindy pushes the camera down.

CINDY
When I met Kent, they hated me. I don't know why. I kept thinking I wasn't pretty enough, or smart enough. They're very judgmental. It's like they have this secret club and you have to pass some bizarre ritual in order to become a member. It takes awhile to earn their respect. I finally gave up trying. All I knew is I loved Kent.

Tracy has gone back to filming.

TRACY
What happened?

CINDY
Jed and Jori didn't like me for years, and Dianna, well...but I think I passed.

TRACY
Will I?

CINDY
I don't know. Jori's first boyfriend was always on the outs. And we've hated all of Dan's choices.

Tracy moans.

CINDY (CONTD)
Listen, If you love Dan, then that's all that matters. Maybe it's because we've only met you a few times and (MORE)
CINDY (CONT'D)
you’ve been over compensating. But yes, we all have reservations about your relationship. But we love Danny. We’re trying to support him.

Tracy puts the camera back down looking thoughtfully.

TRACY
Thanks.

CINDY
I’ll tell you right now, though, if you do anything to hurt Danny, I will be the first Scooley to give you what for. To quote the matriarch, “I’ll boot your fanny to Timbuktoo and back.” Got it?

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Allison sits on the bed. Scooley enters and sits next to her.

SCOOLEY
Hey.

Allison looks at her hands.

ALLISON
Hey.

SCOOLEY
What cha thinkin’?

Allison shrugs.

SCOOLEY
Well, I won’t lie about it. You know what your mom was doing in the bathroom, right?

Allison nods her head.

SCOOLEY
And at school, they tell you it’s (MORE)
Scooley (Contd)

Wrong and awful and bad. Sweetheart, remember last year when we went up to Santa Maria for the baseball tournament and the little league wasn’t going to let us play because there were girls on the team? But we went to the council and complained.

Allison

You told them it was wrong to discriminate against teams that had boys and girls. And we won. We got to play.

Scooley

Right! Well, there are laws that Mommy and I think are wrong, and we’re working to change them.

Allison

Like how happy you and Mommy were when they passed that law that made it okay to smoke marijuana when you’re sick.

Scooley

Exactly. Mommy and I think all drugs should be okay to use, but not all the time. Just like you can’t have pop all the time.

Allison

Or the front seat.

Scooley (laughs)

You have to share with Livy, huh?

Allison

Daddy, will you go to jail?

Scooley tries to cover his shock.

Scooley (Contd)

No. sweetie. We’re not going to go to jail. We’ll be around forever to pester you and make sure you do your chores.
He gives her a big squeeze.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
I love you, you know.

ALLISON
I love you, too.

EXT. DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Scooley, Dan, Kent Jed and Jori dance with Jo. Jo moves her hips, snaps her fingers and clicks with her tongue. Bill motions them together. They dance into a line and Bill takes their picture.

EXT. RECEPTION TABLE - NIGHT

“Best Man” Scooley stands and begins to clink his glass. The crowd becomes quiet.

SCOOLEY
I met my wife nineteen years ago and within five minutes she told me... cover your ears, girls... within five minutes she told me I was full of shit.

The crowd LAUGHS.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
Her dad thought so, too. But love’s a funny thing. It only involves the two people in love. Everyone else can think what they want but their opinions don’t matter. I knew then that this woman was for me. She could see my soul. Eighteen years ago today, I married her.

The crowd APPLAUDS and CHEERS as Scooley bends over to kiss Michelle.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
Thank you. Today, we’re here to celebrate another marriage. My little (MORE)
brother has found a mate. Dan, if I know you, you've already told Tracy he's full of crap.

Smattering of LAUGHTER.

Scooley (Cont'd)
You're very lucky you've found my brother. He's honest, caring and hard working and sees only the good in people. That's the good news. The bad news is that when you put on that ring today, you married the whole Scooley family. We can be overbearing and obnoxious and we put our noses in places they don't belong. Understand that we love Dan and we only wish for him happiness and Tracy, you seem to make my brother happy. For that, I am grateful. Michelle --

Michelle rises and they wrap their arms around each other.

Scooley
To the happy couple. Like us, may they be surrounded by love, peace and good fortune.

The crowd CHEERS, glasses CLINK and Dan beams at Scooley.

Ext. Dan's Convertible - Night

The car sits outside an apartment complex. Tracy is in the driver's seat. Monique is slumped in the back, humming softly. Mary is getting out of the car.

Mary
Scooley was right. You have married the whole family, they're screwed.

Tracy
No more than our fucked family, Mommy. Good night.

She closes the door. Tracy waves mockingly.
The following morning. Jo and Bill are leaving with Allison and Olivia. Margaret and Phil Sr. are also leaving.

Bill is loading the trunk while Jo takes pictures. Tracy films her. Phil Sr. approaches Jori.

**PHIL SR.**
Sweetheart, I’ve been thinking about what you said. Could I call you sometime?

**JORI**
Sure. That’d be nice.

**PHIL SR.**
Margaret and I were thinking we could come visit you this fall. Meet the new boyfriend.

**JORI**
I’d like that a lot. But we’ll see about meeting the boyfriend. I’m not sure how much longer he’ll be in the picture.

**PHIL SR.**
Sure, whatever. I just really want to see you.

Phil swallows then hugs her.

**MICHELLE**
Be good. Remember your manners and I’ll see you in two days.

Jo comes over to Michelle, Allison and Olivia.

**JO**
Now don’t you worry. They’ll be fine. I raised this brood didn’t I?

Michelle smiles nervously. Jo waves her arms.

**JO**
I want a family picture before I go.
Kent MOANS.

KENT
Just one, Mom, all right?

JO
Just one.

The family gathers. Margaret and Phil stand back by camper. Bill tries to take the camera from Jo.

BILL
Here, you get in the picture.

Jo swats his hand.

JO
I just want a picture of the kids.

Olivia is turned around, her backside facing the camera.

MICHELLE
Olivia! What are you doing? Turn around.

OLIVIA
What Uncle Kent did. Grandma Jo can take a picture of my butt.

Everyone LAUGHS.

MICHELLE
Grandma wants a picture of your face.

JO
That's right, sweetie. I only get one picture, unless --

Scooley AND KENT
No!

Olivia turns around. Jo takes the picture.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Jed sits on couch, reading. Jori is looking through CDs.
JORI
Hey, Jed, got any pot?

JED
No! Are you kidding? I'm scared of Airport security. You know, Whitney Houston and all.

JORI
Yeah. I think Scooley and Michelle are out and I want to get stoned.

JED
Me, too. Try not to think about it.

Jori continues looking for a CD.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Cindy and Michelle are making hamburger patties for the meal later. Jori's music selection begins to play.

MICHELLE
Jo was dumb to sign everything over to Bill.

Michelle washes hands in sink.

CINDY
She's counting on him dying first. Somebody's fourteen years older.

Michelle drinks from a frosted beer mug.

MICHELLE
She's providing for her
(baby talks)
'babies'.

Michelle pours remainder of Budweiser into mug.

CINDY
And at the same time screwing Bill's kids out of almost two-thirds of their inheritance.
They both LAUGH.

MICHELLE
Yeah, if Dianna were alive --

Michelle takes another drink. Kent and Scooley come in through the back door, looking tired and sweaty. Scooley, feeling good, walks to refrigerator.

SCOOLEY
The tables and chairs are stacked, the pump’s back on, the deck’s hosed down --

Scooley has pulled a frosted mug from freezer.

KENT
And the grill is ready to go.

CINDY
The burgers are ready to go.

SCOOLEY
Hey, where’s the --

Scooley sees Budweiser can on island and picks it up.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
God Damn it! You drank the last Budweiser. Jesus Christ, didn’t you hear me tell you I wanted the Budweiser when we were done outside?

KENT
I think there’s some Miller in --

MICHELLE
We’ll go buy more.

SCOOLEY
That’s not the fucking point! You were standing right over there when I said --

MICHELLE
I was combing the girls’ hair and telling them --
CINDY
It's just a beer, guys.

SCOOLEY
Don't give me that crap!

MICHELLE
... to behave for Grandma Jo.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY
Jed and Jori both look up, listening.

JORI
What's going on?

JED
Oh, god. I don't want to know.

SCOOLEY (O.S.)
You're lying! You said okay!

MICHELLE (O.S.)
I'm not lying! How am I supposed to listen to you --

SCOOLEY (O.S.)
You're a fucking bitch!

Jori's eyes widen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

MICHELLE
...and talk to the girls about...
What! What did you call me?

KENT
Hey. Hey. It's just a Bud.

SCOOLEY
You heard me.
MICHELLE
You scum. Calls his wife a bitch.
You’re shit.

Scooley takes a menacing step toward her.

MICHELLE (CONTD)
Go on. If you think it’ll make you a man!

Kent moves around the island and stands between them.

KENT
Hey. Hey! Calm down you two. What you both need is a nice joint.

SCOOLEY
We don’t have any more. She didn’t want to risk bringing it all.

MICHELLE
We have kids!

SCOOLEY
Right! We have kids. You weren’t thinking about our kids when you sent me on a fucking wild goose chase to get some coke to bring with us --

MICHELLE
You wanted some, too, to get through this freaky weekend!

SCOOLEY
...and then we fucking got caught.

KENT
That’s okay! That’s okay! Let’s relax. It’s been a wild weekend for all of us. Cindy and I have a stash we brought with us.

CINDY
Thanks to the Freedom Bag. It has a hidden compartment.
KENT
Right. So we’ll go upstairs, have a joint, talk this out calmly and rationally and then we’ll go get some Budweiser.

Kent leads a gruff Scooley to the back stairs.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

JORI
Well isn’t that the usual Scooley drama. Fighting over the last Budweiser so Kent and Cindy get them stoned. Go upstairs and see what’s going on.

JED
No! You go.

Jori storms back into room. Jed has his head in his hands.

JORI (CONTD)
They wouldn’t let me in! They were smoking, too. I could smell it.

Jed says nothing.

JORI (CONTD)
I’m so pissed. Is it too much to ask? I just want to get stoned.

Jed stands and walks to the door.

JED
Me, too. Me, too. Me, too.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

Jed walks out onto porch obviously depressed. He stands for a moment then bolts down the steps and across the lawn.
INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jori is eating cheese off of leftover wedding tray. Dan and Tracy come in through back door.

DAN
Hey! We got one toaster oven returned --

JORI
Quick! Get some Bud before the house explodes.

DAN
What?

JORI
Oh, never mind.

DAN
What's going on?

JORI
Being the mature connoisseurs that they are, Scooley and Michelle are upstairs fighting over the last Budweiser and Cindy and Kent are using pot as a marriage counseling method.

TRACY
Where's Jed?

JORI
I don't know. He disappeared.

EXT. BALBOA PARK - NIGHT

Jed sits on a swing swaying back and forth, his head resting on the chain.

EXT. DAN'S PATIO - NIGHT

The Scooleys are gathered around patio table eating grilled hamburgers and leftovers.
The stereo plays jazz. The siblings are LAUGHING. Jed comes through the gate, subdued. The family stops talking.

SCOOLEY
Jedder!

DAN
Come join us. We set you a spot.

KENT
Yeah! We've got some burgers right here.

JED
(quietly)
Thanks.

Jed sits down and silently fills his plate.

KENT
Here are the buns.

CINDY
Jori, pass down the ketchup and mustard.

MICHELLE
The potatoes.

SCOOLEY
Hey, Jedder, where'd ya go?

DAN
Yeah, Jed, we were getting worried.

JED
I'm sorry, I just needed to go for a walk.

DAN
Did your walk help? You seem upset.

Jed puts down ketchup bottle, falls back in his seat and takes a deep breath.

CINDY
What is it?
JED
Oh, it's just... it's just... Okay. Today Jori is saying how she wanted to get stoned, and I did too but nobody had any. And then Scooley and Michelle get in a huge fight over the last Budweiser and Jori overheard Kent say they had --

MICHELLE
You were eavesdropping?

JED
...some so they went upstairs to get stoned.

JORI
You were yelling. It wasn't hard.

JED
And Jori wanted to be up there and so did I so she goes up and nobody would let her in.

KENT
They needed to be alone. We were just trying to get them to talk.

JORI
About the last Budweiser.

JED
I had to leave.

MICHELLE
You spoiled brat!

DAN
You needed to be alone.

MICHELLE
It was Kent and Cindy's weed to do with as they fucking pleased. You expect them to give in to your every whim just like your mom! You selfish brat.
JORI
Look who’s talking. They used you as the model for Trailer Trash Barbie.

SCOOLEY
Jesus, Jori.

MICHELLE
Spoiled baby’s gonna call names ‘cuz she can’t get what she wants.

JORI
I’m not calling names. I’m just identifying the cheap merchandise.

MICHELLE
You fucking --

JED
Stop it! Stop It!

Jed stands to BANG his hands on the table. Everyone falls silent.

JED (CONTD)
That’s why I ran! To get away from this! Just once can’t we get together drink ourselves raw? “Somebody drank 47 Budweisers.” You were fighting over a beer! A fucking beer! Is it any wonder Dad wants to lecture us? I’m amazed I was able to quit smoking! Fucking Oprah says we have addictive personalities.

JORI
Oh geez, addiction issues.

JED
Hello! Dad’s an alcoholic! We can’t deny we weren’t affected! Look at me! I’m a wreck! I smoke way too much pot and I sleep with every Tom, Dick and Harry! Are we destined to repeat the mistakes of our parents? Look at Dianna! Look at P.J.! It’s a cycle!
Jed picks up beer bottle and hurdles it into pool.

    KENT
    Jesus!

    JED

Jed pushes his chair away from the table and walks into house. Silence.

INT. FRONT STAIRS - NIGHT

Jed is sitting on the stairs under family photos. He has his arms wrapped around his legs and his chin rests on his knees. Scooley sits down next to him.

    SCOOLEY
    Hey.

    JED
    Hey.

    SCOOLEY
    Ya doin' okay?

    JED
    Yeah. Scooley Drama. It should be dysfunction first, dysfunction last, dysfunction always.

    SCOOLEY
    Come on. Don't be so down.

Jed does not respond.

    SCOOLEY (CONTD)
    Jed, this is our vacation. The first one in a long time. We want to have fun. We don't do this all the time. Fuck, this old body couldn't take it.

    JED
    Oh, here's the excuse.
SCOOLEY
No excuses. The key is moderation. Listen, everyone has their vices. Exercise is addictive, caffeine is a stimulant, Dan and Dad have their anti-depressants. I'd even say Oprah has issues with food.

Jed smiles.

SCOOLEY
Everything in moderation.

JED
Sometimes I don't think I can 'moderate'. I go crazy. Dianna couldn't, Mom can't. P.J. is in the cycle, I don't want to see that happen to Allison or Olivia.

SCOOLEY
I know. And I'll be damned if any of my actions --
(beat)
Michelle and I are in counseling.

Jed looks at Scooley.

SCOOLEY (CONTD)
We know we push buttons. The point is we're trying. The girls are doing great you know that.

JED
Yes, they are.

SCOOLEY
The key is moderation.

JED
And if you can't moderate?

SCOOLEY
Check yourself into Betty Ford.

Jed LAUGHS.
Scooley
Life is good. Everything will be okay.

Jed
This is not some movie, damn it.
Life is not two hours long where
all is happily resolved in the
last scenes. There are no happy endings.

Scooley
Jeez, Jed, life’s too short be so
fucking fatalistic.

Jed
Life moves towards death. That’s fatalistic.

Scooley
No, life moves towards enlightenment.
You’re moving towards enlightenment.
You said some smart things out there.

Jed
Thanks.

Scooley
Oprah would be proud.

Jed
Enough already!

Scooley
You’re right. Life’s not a movie,
but there are happy moments that we
need to cherish during the bad times.
We can at least make this scene happy.
Something we’ll remember to help
sustain us when life is tough. Right? Right?

Jed
Right.

Scooley
We’re not gonna solve all our problems
tonight, but we’re wiser, thanks to you.
Now let’s go have some fun before the movie
ends and the lights come up on reality.
Scooley tossles his younger brother’s hair. Jed smiles.

EXT. FRONT LAWN - MORNING

Kent and Cindy are putting suitcases in rental car. Michelle and Scooley are doing the same with their camero. Tracy, Jed, Jori, and Dan are standing on lawn. Kent SLAMS trunk and heads around to the driver’s door.

KENT
Okay, let’s get this show on the road. We’ve got a plane to catch. Bye, bye. Love ya. See ya later.

Kent opens door and begins to get in.

DAN
Wait a minute! You’re not getting out of here without a hug.

TRACY
Or a picture.

KENT
Oh, jeez.

Scooley and Michelle have come around from their car.

SCOOLEY
(chanting)

KENT
Then let’s get it over with.

DAN
Somebody needs to carry on the tradition.

KENT
(quickly)
I’ll take it.

He reaches for Tracy’s camera.
TRACY
No need to. Camera has got a timer.

Kent looks disappointed. Instinctively, the others begin to move into formation.

CINDY
Short people in front.

KENT
What’s he doing? He doesn’t have a stand.

DAN
Honey, you don’t have the stand.

TRACY
Don’t need it. I’m’gonna put it on top of the car.

Tracy opens driver door to be closer to where he is going to put the camera. He bends his knees and contorts as he focuses the camera.

MICHELLE
Won’t it be tilted?

KENT
Yes, it will be crooked.

DAN
Tracy, won’t the picture turn out askew?

TRACY
Sure. It’ll be cool.

SCOOLEY
Sure. It’ll be artistic!

Tracy squats to raise the camera over his head, puts it on top of the car and then rushes over to stand next to Dan.

DAN
Glamour first,

DAN, JED AND JORI
Glamour last,
Glamour always.

The camera blinks, then flashes.

INT. SCOOLEY AND MICHELLE’S KITCHEN – DAY

Michelle, Scooley enter through back door as the girls run to their rooms with bags. Scooley throws down keys and hits answering machine button.

MICHELLE
Don’t be trying anything on. Those clothes are for school and I don’t want you getting them dirty!

The answering machine BEEPS and Jo’s voice is heard.

JO (O.S.)
This is your only mama, calling, to tell you that the doctors have found some teensy weensy spots on my liver and one in my spine – –

Scooley and Michelle react.

INT. DAN’S HOME OFFICE – DAY

Dan sits at desk with head in his hands. Tracy stands behind him, rubbing Dan’s back as they listen.

JO (O.S.)
Now, don’t you worry. It’s nothing. Everything is fine. It’s okay. Dr. Watkins says I can beat it again – –

INT. KENT AND CINDY’S DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Kent and Cindy stand, hugging, listening. Kent is breathing heavy.
JO (O.S.)
... and you know what happens when you put your mind to it. You can do anything! There’s nothing you can’t do.

INT. JED’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jed is laying in the fetal position on his futon, listening.

JO (O.S.)
I’ve never felt stronger! Dr. Watkins says I’m a fighter. I can do this, if I put my mind to it.

INT. JORI’S APARTMENT

Jori sits on the end of her bed. She is in tears, rocking back and forth.

JO (O.S.)
I’m okay. I’m fine. Everything will be all right. Don’t worry. I love you.

The answering machine beeps. Silence except for Jori’s sobs.

END